The Industry's Largest Circulation Trade Weekly

Issue 67 Friday December 24 1999

MCV The Market for Home Computing & Video Games

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UK & INTERNATIONAL EDITION
The Industry's Largest Circulation Trade Weekly
Issue 67 Friday December 24 1999

MCV The Market for Home Computing & Video Games

Ray Maguire enjoys a merry Christmas as PlayStation hits 5m in the UK

Page 5

Graham Chambers outlines major new online venture from upwardly mobile Ubi

Page 7

Bruno Bonnell gains personality award, as MCV reviews the best of the '90s

Pages 14-22

International	8
Development	10
Appointments	25
New Releases	29
Charts	32
Classifieds	30

Indie retail gets new trade show

Specialist Computer Retail Event, known as SCoRE, will take place in Birmingham on April 16th

A NEW TRADE SHOW dedicated to the independent retail sector has been pencilled in for the spring.

Taking over from the NASCR Indie Event, the new higher profile Specialist Computer Retailer Event (SCoRE) will look to attract more exhibitors and visitors. It will also link up with the industry's market leading trade weekly MCV.

SCoRE will take place at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham, close to the NEC, on Sunday April 16th. It will be organised by Miller Freeman.

NASCR is backing new indie event

Independent retail body NASCR will be closely linked to the new event, holding its AGM on the Sunday at 4pm, but it is hoped that the number of non-members in attendance will now increase.

Some 50 exhibitors are expected at SCoRE, covering all sectors within the games and home computer marketplace.

Distributors and services companies will be particularly in evidence, with a target attendance of around 500.

"We want to build on the success of the previous indie events, with the change of name and new venue making SCoRE an essential date in the diary," commented Andy Lane of Miller Freeman.

■ For more information about SCoRE, call 0208 987 7723.

Struthers quits EA for Crave

CRAVE Entertainment is ending 1999 on a high, having poached the highly rated Graeme Struthers from Electronic Arts to take a senior management role within its growing European operation.

Struthers has held the position of European marketing director for the EA-owned Westwood Studios for just over a year. He switches to Crave in the New Year, reporting directly to European boss Christian Gloe.

GTI acquisition complete

INFOGRAMES has completed its $135 million acquisition of GT Interactive three weeks ahead of schedule, and THQ man Mike Heller may join in a new senior US role early next year.

The French giant now owns 70 per cent of the New York-based publishing and distribution group, which also boasts leading studios such as Reflections, Wizardworks, Oddworld and Cavedog.

GTI has its financial problems (it lost $61m in the six months to Sep 30th), but the deal has gone down well on the Paris Bourse.

With various offices in global territories, the next decision for Infogrames is how to consolidate.

It also wants to use GTI to boost its US presence. Heller, who has achieved success working with CEO Brian Farrell at THQ, would be an impressive big name signing.

Fire unveils games arm

A NEW software publishing and development division has been set up by Fire International.

Called Firesoft, it will initially support PC, Sega Dreamcast, Sony PlayStation 2 and Game Boy.

An in-house team of a dozen developers, working under the name Future Console Design, will be bolstered early in the New Year through a major recruitment drive for programmers, graphic artists and musicians.

Three Colour Game Boy titles are already set for release in the second quarter of 2000.

Firesoft has also flagged up an interest in signing publishing deals for games titles created by independent studios.

2000: Year of the Game Boy

Pokemon fever creates staggering 2m sales target for veteran

ALL EYES may be on PlayStation 2, but the best selling hardware next year could be Game Boy.

The handheld will reach record UK sales of 900,000 units in the UK in '99 and distributor THE Games is predicting staggering sales of up to two million units in 2000.

Pokemon Red and Blue are set to have sold 500,000 by January.

The UK is now Game Boy's biggest Euro market

"Based on what's happened in the US, there's no reason why we shouldn't double hardware sales next year to between 1.8m and two million units," said THE Games' boss Dick Francis.

■ Meanwhile, Nintendo has just started distributing software development kits for its impressive next-generation handheld, the Game Boy Advance.

The machine is expected to hit Japanese retail in September, possibly rolling out across Europe in time for next Christmas.

Shiny solves Matrix

Interplay-owned development studio Shiny Entertainment is to develop a game based on movie blockbuster The Matrix. It is likely to take the form of a 3D fighting game and will be released to coincide with the second Matrix film, which is due to hit screens in 2001.

McLaren

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WORLD CHAMPIONS 1999

PlayStation prices inch up

Electronics Boutique follows HMV up to £34.99 on Top 10 titles, but Virgin is yet to be convinced

RETAIL has made tentative moves to shift PlayStation software prices upwards, with at least two major chains taking key titles back to £34.99.

Following almost six months of intense discounting on PlayStation titles, which has seen the average price drop to £29.99, EB and HMV are now refusing to slash RRPs with the same ferocity as some of their competitors. Many Top 10 titles are now being sold at £34.99.

The minor hike follows a turbulent few weeks on the High Street, with Dixons and EB refusing to take products with RRPs of over £34.99. The EB group was even forced to revise its profit forecasts for the year as a result of the dip in sales revenue.

But Virgin, which began the move to £29.99 in the summer, says it is sticking with low prices. "The reality with PlayStation is that consumers have a number of low-cost alternatives," product manager Bart Saunt told MCV.

PlayStation Street Prices

	Tomb Raider 4	Tomorrow Never Dies
HMV Oxford Street	£34.99	£34.99
HMV Kingston	£34.99	£34.99
HMV Brent Cross	£34.99	£34.99
Virgin Oxford Street	£29.99	£29.99
Virgin Kingston	£29.99	£29.99
Virgin Brent Cross	£29.99	£29.99
EB Oxford Street	£34.99	£34.99
EB Kingston	£34.99	£34.99
EB Brent Cross	£34.99	£34.99

Source: MCV. All information correct as of December 17th.

Another fine year for Sony UK

The UK's favourite console is now safely installed in 5 million homes, 1.4m shifted this year

THE PLAYSTATION has gained an installed base of five million units in the UK and is owned by 25 per cent of all households.

The console reached its latest milestone last week, marking the UK as the largest PlayStation market in Europe.

Over 1.4m hardware sales are expected in this calendar year. This is slightly lower than last year's total of 1.7m but is impressive given that this is the PlayStation's fifth Christmas on sale in the UK market.

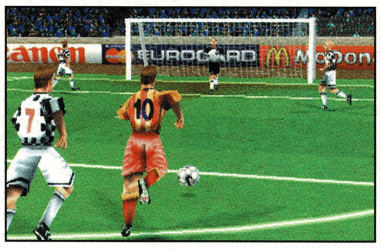
"PlayStation has always led the field in the gaming market, but reaching five million units is certainly a landmark for video games," commented SCE's UK managing director Ray Maguire.

"This Christmas, sales are as strong as previous years."

Sega, meanwhile, last week reached 200,000 UK Dreamcast sales since launch on October 14th. The firm has warned that stock will be tight over Christmas, with sales expected to reach 250,000 by the year end.

MAGUIRE: "5m units is a landmark for games market"

Replay for Eidos



UEFA Champions League will return in the spring

EIDOS will attack the football sector again in March, with an update of Champions League.

UEFA Champions League 1999/2000 has been developed by Silicon Dreams and adds a host of new features to the 1998 release.

The PlayStation and PC title contains all teams, kits and players of the current tournament alongside all past winning sides, plus all new animation techniques.

Commentary is provided by Bob Wilson, Clive Tyldesley and Kevin Keegan, while custom and scenario modes are featured.

Smiths increases copying

THE INNOVATIVE duplication system introduced by WH Smith will be extended next year.

The games scheme has already been installed into three of the chain's sites at Blue Water, Brent Cross and Holborn Circus in London, with more set to follow over the next 12 months.

The system already enjoys support from the likes of Activision, Hasbro, Eidos and The Learning Company, with the number of titles on offer having also doubled within the last couple of months.

"We hope to have the system installed into all of our stores eventually," said a WH Smiths spokesperson.

"It's certainly a big part of our multimedia strategy."

Infogrames signs Disney PC

INFOGRAMES has snapped up the distribution rights to Disney's PC titles in the UK and Ireland.

The new two-year agreement brings UK distribution in line with Germany, Spain, Portugal, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South Africa, where Infogrames already handles the company's PC line-up. The UK was previously serviced by Buena Vista Home Entertainment.

Disney Interactive will continue to handle publishing functions, with the first titles being distributed by Infogrames being the three products based on the Toy Story 2 movie.

Software Revenues

Week ending December 11th

	Last Week	This Week
Total Market	£33.6m	**£40.0m**
Full Price Console	£18.1m	**£22.0m**
Full Price PC	£9.6m	**£10.6m**
Budget Console	£4.3m	**£5.1m**
Budget PC	£1.6m	**£2.0m**
Cumulative 1999:		**£743.1m**

Top Earners This Week

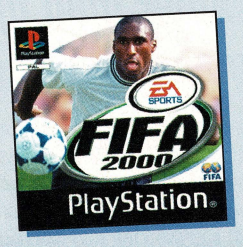
1. Tomb Raider 4 (Eidos) PSX/PC
Likely to be Xmas No. 1 **£2,657,684**

2. FIFA 2000 (EA Sports) PSX/PC
Held off the top by Lara **£1,585,739**

3. Tomorrow Never Dies (EA/MGM) PSX
Licensed to sell buckets **£1,577,954**

4. Champ. Manager 99/00 (Eidos) PC
Eidos continues to score **£848,985**

5. Crash Team Racing (SCEE) PSX
TV has boosted sales **£827,994**



Source: MCV/ChartTrack/Elspa

Share Prices

	Price 18/12/99	One week % change
US		**%**
3Dfx	9.219	-5.45%
3DO	8.125	-13.33%
Acclaim	5.031	-9.04%
Activision	15.125	-3.59%
Adrenalin Interactive	2.813	-33.81%
Brilliant Digital	25	750.92%
Creative Technology	18.438	4.24%
eGames	3.563	-1.71%
Eidos	94.625	-4.12%
Electronic Arts	81.5	-28.63%
Electronics Boutique	20.5	-10.38%
Funco	18.5	-5.13%
GT Interactive	2	6.67%
Hasbro	18.625	-11.31%
HearMe.com	28.875	7.94%
Intel	82.063	13.58%
Intergraph	4.688	10.31%
Interplay	2.625	-16.00%
Mattel	12.625	-6.05%
Microsoft	115.25	22.77%
Midway	21	-10.16%
Number Nine Visual Tech.	0.625	-16.67%
Recoton	7.688	4.24%
S3	10	14.29%
Silicon Graphics	9.438	-19.68%
Take-Two	14.875	-8.82%
THQ	29	-11.96%
Toys R Us	14.875	-0.83%
Walt Disney	28.25	0.78%
UK		**%**
Electronics Boutique	0.365	-2.67%
Eidos	59.75	-1.24%
Future Net	8.53	-4.16%
Gameplay.com	4.65	13.41%
Online	3.165	-5.94%
Pure Entertainment	1	-11.50%
Rage	0.568	10.29%
SCi	4.4	5.39%
France		**%**
Cryo	33	-3.08%
Infogrames	139.8	3.94%
Kalisto	57	16.33%
Titus	40.5	-12.43%
Ubi Soft	205	10.22%
Vivendi	83.55	-9.63%

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Comment

Above all, another year with more to cheer

WHILST sticking to last week's point that more units hasn't necessarily meant more revenue this Christmas (proven by some retailers' late move back to £34.99 on key titles), my last column of the year demands upbeat reflection.

Most positive of all is that, judging by the old cyclical rules, 1999 should have been a dip year but hasn't been. This is impressive, given that the lead format is ageing, new technology is either here and expensive or not here at all, and certain non-specialist chains are slashing prices rather than thinking.

It all sounds a bit like Christmas 1994, when the Mega Drive was running into a brick wall, early CD formats like 3DO were just arriving and certain non-specialist chains were slashing prices rather than thinking. That led to a desperate 1995 until PlayStation arrived in the September which we all hope, and many believe, will not be repeated.

Even if 1999/2000 proves to be flat rather than up like all the reports claim, we've got a lot to shout about.

Even if 1999/2000 proves to be flat rather than up like all the reports claim, we've got a lot to shout about. The PlayStation is now in 25 per cent of TV households in the UK, shifting another 1.4m in the past 12 months and taking the installed base to five million.

The Game Boy drives on, with another 900,000 sales this year. Dreamcast is at 200,000 and even the N64 has notched another 300,000 - with the release of Donkey Kong 64 proving just how profitable this format can still be given the right ammunition.

Next year PlayStation 2 and Game Boy Advance will go on sale. A new Nintendo static console and Microsoft's X-Box will end their days as vapourware and DVD-ROM will start to be used properly by PC developers.

Online retail will add an interesting dynamic to the business, bringing its own challenges and opportunities. Will it steal retail sales or further grow the business? The answer is almost certainly a bit of both.

Indeed, online might just make retail work harder to create the right kind of environment for 21st century shoppers. Witness Virgin Megastores' current investment. Demonstration areas including in-floor rumble pads (Bluewater) or browsing areas with seating and a café (Glasgow) are possibly as much a vision of the future as its original 'megastore' concept was in the 1980s. Time, as the cliché insists, will tell.

Meanwhile MCV is taking a two-week break, but we'll be back before you know it to keep you informed of every twist and turn this business makes in 2000.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all of us.

Stuart Dinsey
Stuart.Dinsey@mcvuk.com

Talking Shop

Goodbye for now - but I'll be back...

IT IS PROBABLY with some relief in certain corners of the industry that this is my final Talking Shop piece for MCV, at least for the foreseeable future.

Whilst it has been immense fun writing for Stuart and his team, I must turn my attention to new business ventures which will increasingly take more of my time.

I believe that I relinquish my position at a difficult time for this industry, when too many good solid independent retailers like Stephen Palmer of Computer Run (*MCV Mail - 17/12*) are deciding to quit the business.

Stephen, and many others like him, is giving up computer retailing after 12 years as he sees little chance of competing against the non-specialist multiples, who think nothing of selling everything at near cost.

Of course, there are new indies coming into the business all the time, but our subscription list at the Game Guide proves that many of these are three-month wonders who fold their businesses when they find the competition too tough.

What with e-commerce, piracy and e-distribution, it is little wonder that myself and many others are now looking for new ventures.

One day publishers will wake up and discover that their only customers are two or three non-specialist multiples who want nothing but cheap stock, big margins and inexhaustible marketing support.

Until that day I will continue to publish the Game Guide, develop the Game Guide EPOS System and will remain chairman of independent retail buying group G30. I may not be quite so vocal in the future, but I will certainly be watching what is going on. As Arnie would say,"I'll be back."

In the meantime, I hand over the reigns to the capable Don McCabe of Chips who starts his new MCV column in the next issue, published on Friday January 14th.

And I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone, friends and foes alike, my very best wishes for Christmas and the new Millennium.

Chris Ratcliff
Chris@game-guide.co.uk

Chris Ratcliff is proprietor of independent publisher Game Guide Publications.

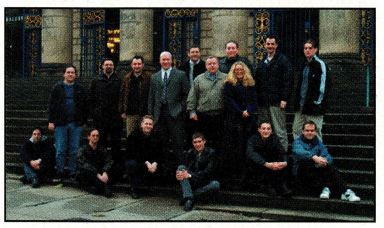
Expansion for Rage

Share offering and new studio sets up Rage for further growth

RAGE SOFTWARE has raised £6.3m through the placing of 12.5m new shares, whilst also adding a new Sheffield studio to its roster of teams.

Each new share went on the market at 52p and a further 19m shares have been bought back by Rage and made available to investors. Brokers Teather & Greenwood confirmed that this includes over 17.7m shares previously owned by Infogrames, which has now sold its Rage stock.

An existing office in Sheffield which was previously a sales base becomes Rage's fifth studio. It joins the existing Liverpool, Newcastle, Birmingham and Warrington teams and will initially house 15 staff. It will be managed by Linda Cliff and will concentrate on original titles.



Rage continues to expand its talent base - and profile

"Sheffield is a hotbed of talent with a large catchment area," said director Colin Stokes. "What started as a sales office has grown into a full fledged studio."

Retail will Buzz in Feb

Multi-platform release looms for Toy Story 2

TOY STORY 2 will take Activision's console range to infinity and beyond in February.

The Disney Interactive title hits PlayStation, Dreamcast and N64 on February 4th, the same day as the Pixar movie opens in the UK.

It will be supported by an extensive marketing campaign, with a cinema commercial and press advertising being lined up.

"With the feedback we've been getting from retail and the performance of the film and game in the US, we are confident of replicating that success to create the best-selling Disney game to date," said Activision's director of marketing Roger Walkden.

Strategy fans get own mag

A NEW MAGAZINE publisher has emerged with a title specifically aimed at fans of the strategy game genre.

PC Strategy Games will launch in spring 2000 through Crimson Publishing. It is the brainchild of Crimson boss David Lester, who founded strategy game publisher Impressions before selling it to Sierra in 1995. He also ran the Impressions US office.

Martin Croft, ex-strategy games editor for Ziff Davis' PC Gaming World, is the new title's editor.

Crimson claims the magazine has come about because the genre does not get enough coverage.

"We think there is a significant untapped market out there, made up of intelligent gamers who will respond extremely positively to a magazine reflecting their passions," explained Lester to MCV.

Sega president to visit Milia

SHOICHIRO IRIMAJIRI, president of Sega, is to present a keynote address at next year's Milia 2000 event.

Irimajiri will be taking part in the Think.Tank Summit on February 15th, where he will discuss his hopes and thoughts for the future of the industry.

The February 15-18th event is taking plan in Cannes and is already shaping up. Codemasters, Gameplay.com and Take 2 have all confirmed floor space, while Monte Cristo is co-sponsoring the Game Village area with Microsoft.

For more information contact Ted Baracos on 00331 4190 4619.

Huge Ubi Soft online move

Millions being pumped into new Gameloft portal, as group sales and profits leap up again

UBI SOFT has embraced the industry's gradual shift online with the launch of a new £9m web service alongside Gallic co-patriots Guillemot.

The firm, buoyant after yet another set of impressive half-year figures, has entered into an online partnership with Guillemot for a dedicated Ubi Soft server. Gameloft.com is a free server with Ubi Soft looking to expand brand awareness through its use.

The site launches in April and visitors will be able to buy games, play online and download add-ons for existing titles. Gerard Guillemot is overseeing the domain, employing 150 people. Ubi Soft and Guillemot have invested an initial £9.65m and will plough a further £6.75m into the service in its first year.

CHAMBERS: "We have to be a part of online move"

"Although the use of Internet is still growing, companies like Amazon and Gameplay have got off to a flier because they are in so early. Hence our move," commented UK managing director Graham Chambers.

"We have to be part of this thing and the server will allow gamers to play a host of titles online, not just our games."

As part of the move, Ubi Soft is looking to add online capabilities to more of its properties, including its educational ranges such as PlayMobil. The firm has no plans to pursue on-line only software yet, however.

Meanwhile, Ubi Soft has recorded interim sales of FF376.3m (£35.9m) for the six months to September 30th - up 25 per cent on the corresponding period last year. Net profit was up 15 per cent to FF19.4m (£1.85m)

Ubi has 60 releases scheduled for next year and estimates the success of its first Dreamcast titles and Rayman 2 will prompt a 40 per cent rise in sales in 2000.

Y2K return for Studio 3

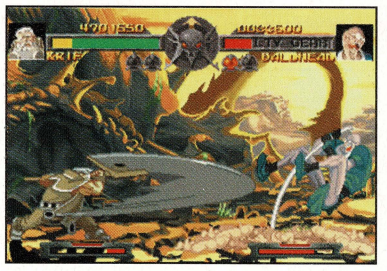
STUDIO 3 continues its phoenix-like rebirth, with boss Mark Cale setting a January date for the company's return as a fully-fledged publisher.

It is doing so via the fighting genre that made its name and will release Guilty Gear for PlayStation at the end of January. A French team has developed the game, with Cale currently negotiating a distribution deal for the range.

The eagerly awaited Game Boy Colour version of IK+ will chop onto the Nintendo handheld in February, while Studio 3 has also picked up the European distribution rights to Takara's fourth Toshinden title. Toshinden 4 will be released for PlayStation in March and Cale feels its addition to the Studio 3 roster is an example of how far the company has come.

"Signing Toshinden 4 is a major coup for Studio 3," he told MCV.

"System 3 made its name with fighting games and to release Toshinden is a real honour. We will now move on from here and become a strong publisher of all varieties of quality releases."



Guilty Gear for PlayStation arrives end of January

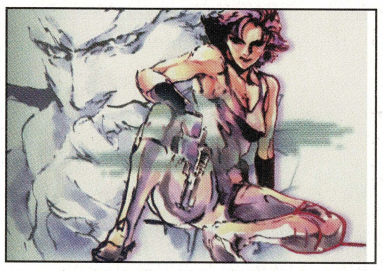
EA rallies round

No surprises, as EA picks up PSX version of Rally

AS EXPECTED, EA has secured the rights to the PlayStation version of Rally Championship.

The firm has added HotGen's well-regarded Sony conversion to its schedule, although a release date has yet to be confirmed. EA picked up Actualize's PC version during the Hasbro/Europress buy-out and it has been a steady fixture in the PC chart in its four weeks on sale.

MGS art attack



Konami has released The Art of Metal Gear Solid, a hardback book containing hundreds of images related to the best-selling PlayStation game. The £29.99 book contains 180 pages lavishly illustrated with conceptual art, magazine covers and a guide to related merchandise.

Flight Sim body takes off

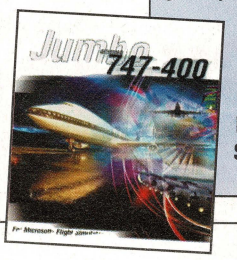
A BODY dedicated to protecting the interests of flight simulator publishers launches in February.

Originally proposed by flight simulation specialist The Associates, the International Flight Simulation Association will be run from the US and is modelling itself on the successful Model Railway Association.

The initial IFSA panel comprises 30 founding delegates and will represent members covering commercial development, publishing and distribution.

The body has emerged in the wake of the release of a number of add-on discs for Microsoft's Flight Simulator range, which collate freeware data and then charge for them. The IFSA will attempt to prevent such instances occurring.

The body's founder Bill Schulz is confident that all major flight simulation specialists and publishers will join. However, Microsoft has already declined membership.



Newswires

Online at $5bn by 2004

A Reuters report states that the online sector of the games industry could be worth over $5bn in Europe within four years. Rising Internet penetration across the West and the success of titles such as Quake III and Unreal Tournament and the advent of the Internet-compatible Dreamcast are cited as key instruments in its take-off. Reuters currently values the global online sector at $82 million.
www.reuters.com

Profits rocket at Take 2

As forecast in MCV last week, Take 2 achieved huge growth during its financial year ending October 31st. Official figures released earlier this week show global turnover up 58 per cent at $305.9m, whilst net profit rose 127 per cent to $16.3m. Sales during Q4 were up 90 per cent at $121.9m, with profits of $9.1m.
Take 2: *01754 854444*

Crave signs Tony Hawk

Global rights to the Dreamcast version of Tony Hawk Pro Skater have been signed up by Crave Entertainment. The game has already been a success for Activision on the PlayStation format, with the Sega version expected to hit stores in the summer.
Crave: *0181 968 8088*

Koch grabs I-CD Publishing

Leading PC distributor Koch has signed up UK Info-Disk publisher I-CD Publishing. It will handle all national and independent account distribution, marketing and product management for the telephone directory software.
Koch Distribution: *0800 169 1341*

Maplin adds Focus

The successful trial of the Focus range in three Maplin stores will be expanded to encompass 22 branches. The electrical catalogue store will feature special promotional display units and POS to herald the arrival of the range.
Focus: *01889 570156*

Sound idea from Sensaura

Sensaura has created a new sound system it claims will allow users to fine-tune their audio hardware to their own hearing. The Virtual Ear lets PC owners tweak hearing cues in gaming environments for a more realistic effect.
Sensaura: *020 8848 6508*

New home for Red Storm

Red Storm Entertainment has moved. The new address is 30b Station Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 4SE. Tel: 01582 716200, Fax: 01582 716201

Malcom Paxton

Peripheral specialist Saitek's national sales manager Malcom Paxton has died after a short illness. Widely respected, he made his name in the toy and grocery trades. "Malcolm is irreplaceable and will be missed by customers, competitors and colleagues alike," said general manager Paul Moodie.
Saitek: *020 7278 0050*

Newswire

Sega takes more honours
USA: The Sega Dreamcast has been named as one of the 'Best Products of 1999' by Business Week Magazine. The publication highlighted the console's design and technology advances, including its 128-bit 3D graphics capabilities, portable gaming options and Internet functionality.

Aldi discounts EA batch
Germany: Discount food chain Aldi has started another price row in the software market, having rolled out a range of EA titles at heavily-reduced prices. Games such as FIFA '99, NBA '99, NHL '99, Need For Speed 3, Little Big Adventure 2 and Alpha Centauri are being sold by the chain at Dm15, a major reduction on the standard Dm80.

Vector heads to US
USA: High-flying British OEM outfit Vector has established a US office. Based in Irvine, California, the division will be headed up by John Goodale as director of North American Operations.

Japan looks to UK firms
Japan: The Japan External Trade Organisation is offering help to UK software companies looking to enter the Japanese market. Interested parties will have their software displayed at a New Product showcase at the World PC Expo in October 2000. For more details call Katharine Murray on 0171 470 4700.

Mexican protests at TS2
USA: Activision has recently witnessed outcry from Latin activitists protesting against the depiction of a Mexican bandit in the Toy Story 2 game. While Disney is apparently looking into changing the character in the movie, Activision has no plans to recall copies of the PlayStation game.

Ari Data plans IPO
Germany: Local publisher Ari Data is planning a flotation in late 2000. The company, which develops and publishes both games and non-games titles, will use the money raised from the IPO for international expansion and to finance a move into online publishing.

Pirates to the rescue
Russia: Local sources have revealed that the copy protection on the localised copies of Half-Life: Opposing Forces have caused so many problems for consumers that pirates in the territory have released their own, protection and problem-free version - copied from grey-imported titles.

Call **Lisa Foster** on **01992 535646** with your international news or e-mail lisa.foster@mcvuk.com

Norway introduces official charts

Industry trade body, the NSM, has appointed Hitcompany to compile the first true hit listings

A NEW agreement between local industry body the NSM and market research firm Hitcompany will see the launch of the first official games charts in Norway in the New Year.

Until now, the Norwegian games market has relied on individual retailer charts on which to monitor the market. The NSM, however, has now appointed Hitcompany - which already produces listings within the music and video markets - to compile official research in the games and home computing sector.

A broad base of retail outlets is already providing the company with sales data, with 'evaluation' charts having run in local entertainment trade magazine Faro Journalen since last month.

Norwegian retailers will soon enjoy official charts

The charts will include an All Formats Top 20, a PC Top 10, PlayStation Top 10 and Nintendo 64 Top 10. Separate listings for Dreamcast and Game Boy Colour will be provided when the markets reach a high enough penetration in the Norwegian market, while charts for reference, learning and budget titles will also be introduced in the near future.

"The charts will be valuable tools for retailers and a unique means for the trade to keep up to date with the effect of their sales efforts," commented Nicolai Nickelsen of IQ Media, who has headed up the NSM's charts committee.

Some 220,000 PlayStations are installed in Norwegian homes, along with around 140,000 N64 consoles. Dreamcast, meanwhile, has had a slow start, with around 2,000 sales since launch.

ED Games seeks partners

ALREADY off to a flyer in the UK, peripherals firm ED Games is now looking for international distribution for its officially-licensed McLaren steering wheel.

The £49.99 Skream wheel is enjoying listings within all major UK retailers, with ED Games currently finalising distribution agreements in nine key European territories. However, the company is now also seeking partners in Eastern Europe, as well as Portugal, Brazil, Russia, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

In addition, ED Games is looking to sign up further distribution in Germany and France to build its presence in those markets.

"The strength of the McLaren endorsement and the quality of the wheel speak for themselves," said ED Games' managing director Igor Cipolletta.

Fire spreads to Hong Kong

POPULAR peripherals outfit Fire International is further expanding its international reach, having opened a new Hong Kong subsidiary.

The company, which already boasts offices in the UK, Europe and the US, has opened the operation in the Shenzhen area. The new manufacturing facility will handle production of the Blaze range of accessories and is expected to have an output of over 500,000 units per month.

Territory Update

Holland

DREAMCAST
1. Soul Calibur
2. Sonic Adventure
3. Sega Rally 2
4. Ready 2 Rumble
5. Toy Commander

PLAYSTATION
1. Tomorrow Never Dies
2. FIFA 2000
3. Tomb Raider 4
4. Crash Team Racing
5. Final Fantasy VIII

NINTENDO 64
1. Super Smash Bros.
2. Rayman 2
3. Mario Party
4. Nukem: Zero Hour
5. Mario Golf

Source: Virgin Megastores

USA

DREAMCAST
1. NBA 2K
2. NFL 2K
3. Sonic Adventure
4. Ready 2 Rumble
5. Soul Calibur

PLAYSTATION
1. NBA Live 2000
2. Tomorrow Never Dies
3. R. Evil 3: Nemesis
4. Spyro The Dragon
5. T. Hawk's Pro Skater

NINTENDO 64
1. Donkey Kong 64
2. WWF Wrestlemania
3. Pokemon Snap
4. Toy Story 2
5. Super Smash Bros.

Source: NPD TRSTS

Gemany

DREAMCAST
1. Sonic Adventure
2. Ready 2 Rumble
3. Speed Devils
4. Sega Rally 2
5. Blue Stinger

PLAYSTATION
1. FIFA 2000
2. Dino Crisis
3. Final Fantasy VIII
4. Formel 1 '99
5. Spyro The Dragon 2

NINTENDO
1. Rayman 2
2. Mario Party
3. Lego Racers
4. Star Wars: Racer
5. C&C

Source: VUD/Media Control

Japan

DREAMCAST
1. Chu-chu Rocket
2. Forbidden Planet
3. Pro Soccer Club
4. Giga Wing
5. Rang Rissor Millenium

PLAYSTATION
1. Flutter Memorial 2
2. Chrono Cross
3. Pachinko Slot
4. Dance Revolution
5. Medarot R

NINTENDO 64
1. Super Robot Battle
2. Super Smash Bros.
3. Pokemon Stadium 2
4. Mario Golf 64
5. Mario Party

Source: Famitsu/64Dream

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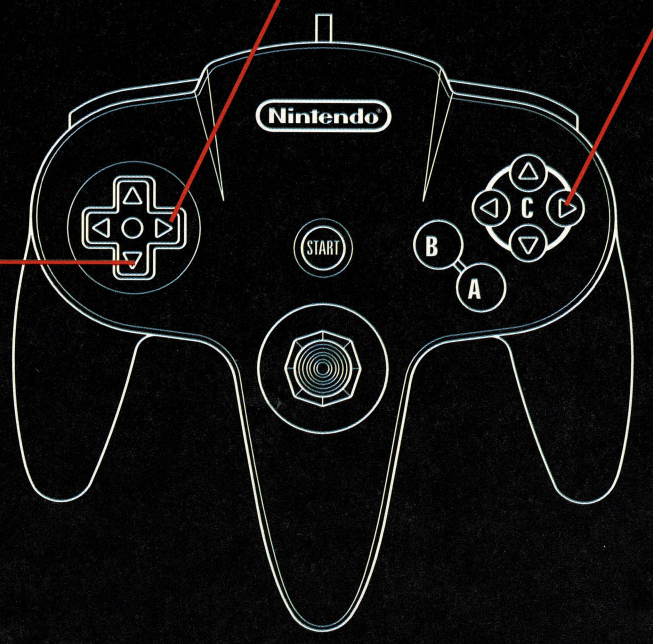
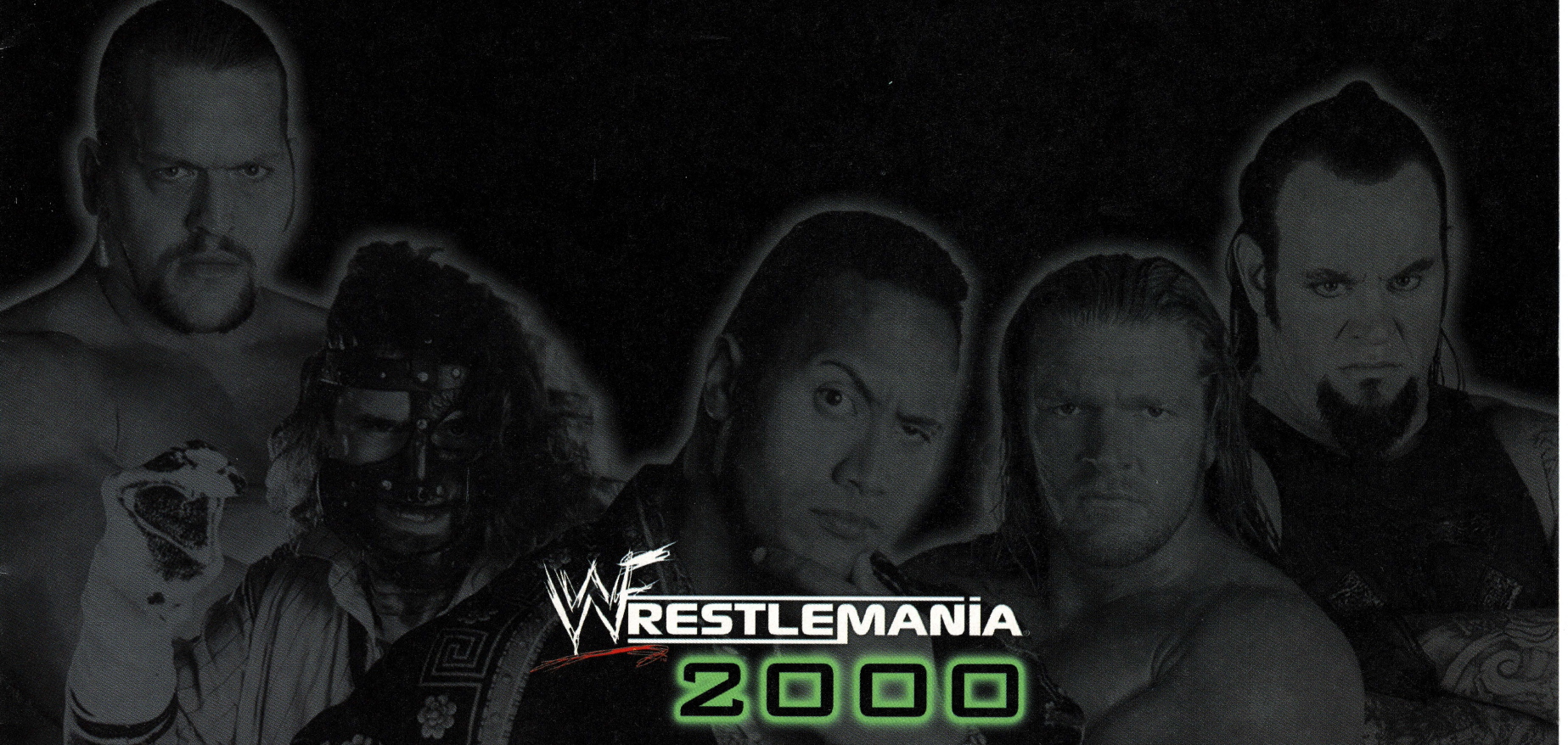


Christmas and New Millennium!



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Deep Red is go with Thunderbirds

Former Hasbro employees aim high with new Milton Keynes studio, SCi deal sees studio clinch top licensed next-gen game

DEEP RED Games is feeling F.A.B following its appointment to develop SCi's big-budget Thunderbirds title.

Founded by Former Hasbro coders Clive Robert and Kevin Buckner, the deal marks the 30-strong studio's first major title. Thunderbirds joins two other projects on the boil at the company's Milton Keynes HQ.

"We're aiming to always have three games on the go," Robert told MCV. "I don't think we'll ever have more than that as when you have more than three teams of ten people to manage, it can remove the focus that each title demands. Kevin and myself have worked on the big stuff at Hasbro and it can be no fun sometimes."

A new conversion of the board game Risk for Hasbro will mark Deep Red's first release, with another title also being developed for the publisher ("something very different for Hasbro," he hinted). But for now the team is working closely with Thunderbirds creator Gerry Anderson for the SCi game.

"Gerry has been brilliant," stated Robert. "He's keen on bringing the franchise into the 20th century and Thunderbirds is going to be

Deep Red has struck it big with Thunderbirds deal

the perfect licence as the backlash against violence in games continues. There will be carnage in the game, but only if the player as International Rescue causes it."

With rumours of a film version of the Supermarionation classic still circulating and a remastering of the 32-episode Tracy family saga expected in 2000, Robert is keen to retain the feel of the series but insists Deep Red will not mock it in any way.

"We're not giving away too much about the game," he says.

"But it will be a real-time strategy title involving all the vehicles and brothers. We won't be featuring wobbly animation or dodgy sets, however. In fact, there are so many possibilities the licence affords that the real difficulty will be battening down all the hatches to get as many ideas as possible in."

Mucky Foot marches onwards

AS ITS Urban Chaos title makes an impression on the PC chart, Britsoft studio Mucky Foot is now busy on its second offering.

The firm was formed three years ago when Mike Diskett became the first Bullfrog staffer to go it alone. Since then, a number of new teams have emerged from the Guildford giant, including Lost Toys and Blue 52, although Diskett's team is the first on to the market with a completed game.

Diskett had no doubts over going it alone and is now looking to follow up the success of Urban Chaos. Cue Space Station, the second part of the studio's three-game deal with Eidos.

Next push for Mucky Foot with sci-fi space epic, while Urban Chaos shifts to PlayStation format

"Urban Chaos has been good for us," he told MCV. "It's not just another racing, fighting or driving game - there's a complete city in there covering all elements."

As the team completes work on the PlayStation conversion, Gary Carr is busy on Space Station. His CV includes Theme Hospital and Space Station supplants that game's comedy/strategy idea within a sprawling space station.

"Players will control every aspect of the station," Diskett explained. "They will have to keep different races happy, ensure plans run smoothly and put up with numerous sci-fi hazards."

Prose 'not dead' insists Hasbro

HASBRO Interactive has moved to counter claims that it intends to kill off MicroProse as both a brand and as a development team.

Speculation has grown over the future of MicroProse as Hasbro announced its intention to withdraw from the high-spec flight sim genre.

However, Hasbro has insisted that there is still a place for the team, citing the development of Gunship, Tank Platoon and B17 Flying Fortress as proof.

While its name seems safe, it does seem unlikely that MicroProse will continue to take to the skies for simulation fare.

Production Line

Wetrix hits US

Manchester-based studio Zed Two's Dreamcast conversion of Wetrix+ has been picked up in the US by Xicat Interactive. Infogrames is still expected to secure the European rights.

Sony funds SGI

Sony is providing partial funding for a graphics division. It is investing Y200m for a 10 per cent stake in the subsidiary which it will eventually use to produce graphics for use in PlayStation 2 titles.

DAG partners PA

Digital Animations has signed a deal to work with PA New Media, a division of the Press Association. DAG will create real-time animation technologies across digital and online formats.

Atlus gets Primal

Japanese developer Atlus has confirmed its first PlayStation 2 title. Call Primal Image, players control a virtual girl. The game will hit Japanese stores alongside the console in March.

In The Studio

Monster Munch

PlayStation 2 brings a new perspective to the Oddworld series...

Product: Munch's Oddysee
Developer: Oddworld Inhabitants
Publisher: GTI/Infogrames
Due: Late 2000 (alongside PlayStation 2)

The game: Simple 2D-platforming is eschewed for a fully simulated 3D biosphere offering genre-busting gameplay - which the developer stresses is only possible on PlayStation 2.

Brand or Licence: The third outing in the Oddworld saga.

Product Strengths: Oddworld is amongst the first Western codeshops to reveal its first PlayStation 2 efforts and the screenshots don't disappoint. But behind the scenes it's even bolder - the free roaming 3D world is alive with herds of animals and a dynamic ecosystem. You'll rob creatures, fatten them with lemonade, and experiment with or rescue lab rats. Where Abe's speech system let you shepherd single characters off-screen on PlayStation, here you'll command whole herds of creatures to change the landscape. It's another one of those concept things...

Question Marks: President Lorne Lanning stresses the studio is spending vast resources in programming "advanced behavioural and social chemistry models". Yet the result must remain accessible to the franchise's unique female fan base.

Development Detail: The studio didn't have to create real-time tool sets for its PlayStation development, and Lanning says that's an advantage. Its Munch's Oddysee tools are designed from scratch for Sony's 128-bit box.

The latest outing for Munch will debut on PlayStation 2

In Their Own Words:
"We expect people will treat the world like it's a terrarium full of living creatures. It's our goal to let people have great fun with this living chemistry set that we're providing them. It will be more like visiting Oddworld than playing Oddworld," Lorne Lanning, President, Oddworld Inhabitants

Prognosis: This radical approach has already sold to girls in an era of boys and Wipeout so they might just pull this off.

Have a fantastic Christmas

...but not a *cracking* New Year!!

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Code Warrior

Our future is in the Stars

Gypsy **Owain Bennallack** looks into the future, to bring us horoscopes for the year 2000...

Pisces
Dolphin (or whatever it's called nowadays) seemed to some as fantastical as a mermaid when announced at E3. But Nintendo will float the machine in 2000. The N64 was delayed by software, not hardware, and Nintendo is only aiming to release a few titles at launch.

Aries
The PlayStation is approaching the combined sales of the SNES and Mega Drive, but where are the shepherds to match?, says Nintendo's venerable Yamauchi. Having gathered its flock, Sony doesn't seem to know where to take them. It'll end in tears.

Taurus
The Bull market in games companies can't last. Smaller UK companies are trading on Internet-style multiples, when small-scale software publishing - and even more development - is just a cyclical business.

Gemini
Sony's second child has twin functions - PlayStation 2 is both a DVD player and a games console. How can Sony get games into the living room without stealing sales of its own standalone DVD players? Oh, and don't expect to see the machine launched in Europe in 2000 - Sony couldn't even handle a global roll-out for the PocketStation...

Cancer
Mass-market gaming is taking games into the broadcast media. Ever more realistic violent images on prime time TV - rather than the occasional copy of Doom found by a killer's bed - will prompt the censors to snap their claws as never before.

Leo
The first truly Big Game arrives in 2000, courtesy of Sega's Shen Mue. All future $20 million projects will be compared to this crucial title.

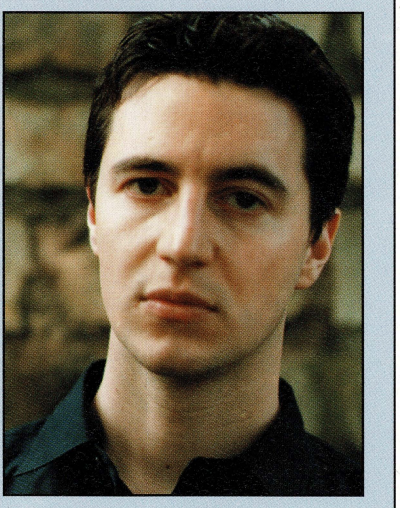
Microsoft's X-Box is coming, so you'd better start planning now for a new addition to the family.

Virgo
Bill Gates may be a gaming Virgin, but like a big-spending frat boy off to pop his cherry, he's going to buy his way in. Microsoft's X-Box is coming, and you'd better start planning for a new addition to the family - or else at least begin taking precautions now.

Libra
'The Balance' apparently. And indeed, revenues will flatten in the year 2000 as software sales and prices fall and the hardware vendors take a hit on loss-leading new systems.

Scorpio
The sting in the tail of going online for publishers is the fear of losing gamers to the Internet. Truly innovative online pioneers could prove to be smaller companies like Hotgen and Pure with nothing to lose.

Sagittarius
A poor year for hunters? Everyone thought Eidos would sell up at £20 a share, but it's still motoring ahead. Meanwhile the GTI deal surely gives Infogrames enough to chew on for now. The only exotic quarry left lies in Asia.



Capricorn
Sega is bucking a trend, the old goat. Dreamcast is off to a fine start, but the lack of confidence within the development community throughout most of 1999 could see the product flow drying up if they're not careful. Online games and hasty PC ports must plug the gaps.

Aquarius
Don't forget to read the market-leading MCV for a watertight analysis of the games industry throughout 2000 and beyond. Sorry, but I get an extra pint for saying that.

Owain Bennallack
Owain.bennallack@virgin.net

We're backing Nintendo 64

CONTRARY to the item on the front page of MCV last week, (*'HMV to drop N64'*), HMV would like to state that we will be continuing our support for N64, and will be looking to increase our share in this format next year.

Frankly, we are amazed that a magazine of MCV's standing would run with a story about HMV on its front page without first attempting to verify its content with ourselves.

As with all the formats that we stock, our product team makes buying decisions on every software title based on our view of the potential sales.

We have refused to take many music CDs, videos and PlayStation games in the past but we have not seen any stories in the press speculating about HMV pulling out of those formats.

David Roche,
Product Director, HMV

Forward Planner

This is the last issue of MCV in 1999. Our next print edition will appear on Friday January 14th, although we will be publishing extended MCV Online Newsflash bulletins on both Friday December 31st and Friday January 7th. Thank you to all our readers for helping us to become the market leading trade weekly. See you in 2000...

Friday December 31st	MCV Online Newsflash: Extended Edition
Friday January 7th	MCV Online Newsflash: Extended Edition

The extended versions of our MCV Online Newsflash service will be available FREE to all 9,100+ subscribers. To ensure that you are kept up to date with all the breaking news during the Christmas period, register with Lisa.Foster@mcvuk.com.

Issue 68 **Friday January 14th** **Year 2000 Industry Outlook**
No relaunch or new size is needed for us. The undisputed market leader (even our rival would seem to agree) returns with an info-packed issue mapping out the year ahead.

Issue 69 **Friday January 21st** **Q1 Games Release Guide**
An exhaustive guide to the key entertainment software titles on their way to retail during the first quarter of 1999.

Advertising ☎ 01992 535647
Editorial ☎ 01992 535646

Exhibitons & Seminars

MCV presents the only weekly guide to the shows and conferences relevant to retailers and business professionals in the interactive entertainment industry...

Computer Trade Show January 26th The National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Tel: 0121 780 4141

Teen Technology 2000 January 27th Café Royal, London Tel: 0171 404 3040

British International Toy & Hobby Fair January 29th-February 2nd Olympia., London Tel: 0207 701 7127

Nuremberg International Toy Fair February 2nd-8th Nuremberg Messe Tel: 01293 416266

Think.Tank February 14th-15th Palais Des Festivals, Cannes 00331 4190 4619

Milia February 15th-18th Palais Des Festivals, Cannes 00331 4190 4619

Game Developers Conference March 8th-12th San Jose Convention Center, San Jose Tel: 0181 742 2828

SCoRE April 16th Motorcyle Museum, Birmingham Tel: 0181 742 2828

E3 May 11th-13th Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles Tel: 001 800 315 1133

CeBIT Home Aug 30th-Sep 3rd Hannover, Germany Tel: 0049 911 2872 145

ECTS September 3rd-5th Olympia, London Tel: 0181 742 2828

If you would like your event featured in the MCV Exhibitions & Seminars Guide, contact Matt.Camp@mcvuk.com

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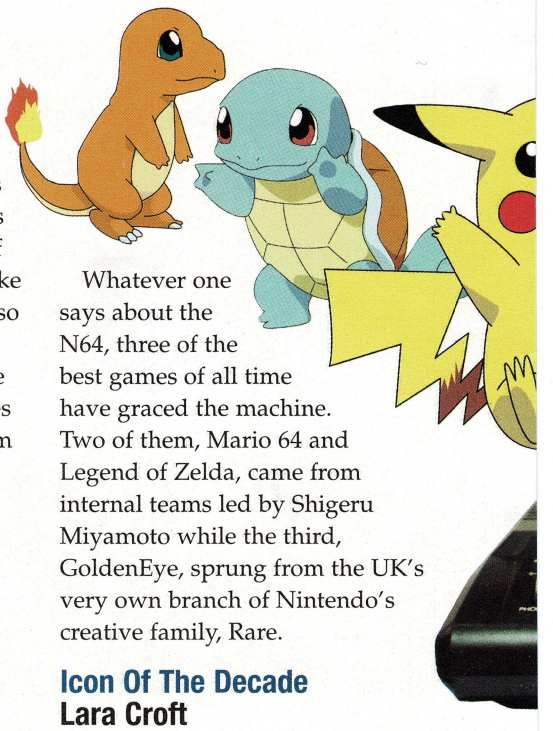
FOCUS MULTIMEDIA

The Biggest, The

As you'd expect, a lot has happened to this still-young industry of ours in the past decade. From boom early on to near-bust in 1994 and ballistic in 1999. The UK market alone could be worth £1.5 billion this year, as opposed to £150m in 1990. Consoles have driven that growth, but PC has played its part. As have publishers, retailers, marketing ploys and media moguls. Dave Roberts runs through MCV's review of the '90s…



Publisher Of The Decade
Electronic Arts

At the start of the '90s Electronic Arts was just another successful publisher. Revenues stood at $72m and it was vying with Acclaim for the global number one spot. Over the next few years, however, whilst Acclaim and virtually all other major publishers have enjoyed and endured the peaks and troughs of the industry itself, EA has sailed pretty serenely onwards and upwards.

It has moved so far ahead of companies that were once its rivals that it now lists Disney, Time Warner and Fox as its competition.

The FIFA series, launched in 1993, is the most successful franchise in Europe, with sales now over 16m. Its deal with AOL has also put it at the vanguard of online gaming. No other dedicated publisher has revenues of more than half EA's $1.2bn.

Infogrames is clearly driven and influenced by the man at the very top.

Personality Of The Decade
Bruno Bonnell

In 1990 Infogrames had just about recovered from an abortive merger with US publisher Epyx. Sales stood at under $10m, its chances of becoming a major stood at less than zero. Then, in 1993, it floated on the Paris Bourse. In 1996 it acquired Ocean. This year it has snapped up Gremlin and GTI, whilst revenues have reached $327.5m.

But it is not just his company's phenomenal progress that makes Bruno Bonnell our Personality of the Decade, it's the fact that unlike some of its rivals, Infogrames is so clearly driven and influenced by the man at the top - and is all the more interesting for it. His quotes on US hegemony alone make him good value for the gong.

Format Of The Decade
PlayStation

There's a strong argument for giving this one to the Game Boy. Nintendo's handheld was, after all, launched at the very start of the decade, has sold consistently well around the world ever since and, with Pokemon in full swing, shows no signs of slowing down.

Ultimately, however, the impact of Sony's console on the industry just can't be ignored. Launched in 1995, it will boast a worldwide installed base of over 70 million by the end of the decade and has pushed gaming to the heart of the cultural mainstream and commercial big league.

The word PlayStation has become interchangeable with video gaming itself.

If PS2 fulfils its potential, it might just push past the cultural touchstone phase and onto true industry standard status.

Developer Of The Decade
Nintendo

If 1980s' Nintendo was an all-conquering box shifter holding third-party publishers to ransom, the 1990s' version has retrenched to its roots as a games maker par excellence. It is the best game maker in the world, bar none.

Whatever one says about the N64, three of the best games of all time have graced the machine. Two of them, Mario 64 and Legend of Zelda, came from internal teams led by Shigeru Miyamoto while the third, GoldenEye, sprung from the UK's very own branch of Nintendo's creative family, Rare.

Icon Of The Decade
Lara Croft

Whilst there's little doubt that on a global level and from an all-time perspective, Mario is the most recognisable and successful game character, Lara Croft surely best represents the growth and changes that have occurred in this business over the last ten years.

Introduced in 1996, Core Design's digital uber-babe has helped clock up total Tomb Raider franchise sales of 15 million (and that's not even counting Tomb IV: Last Revelation).

Her appearance on the cover of The Face in May '97 was a pivotal moment for the whole industry.

Manufacturer Of The Decade
Sega

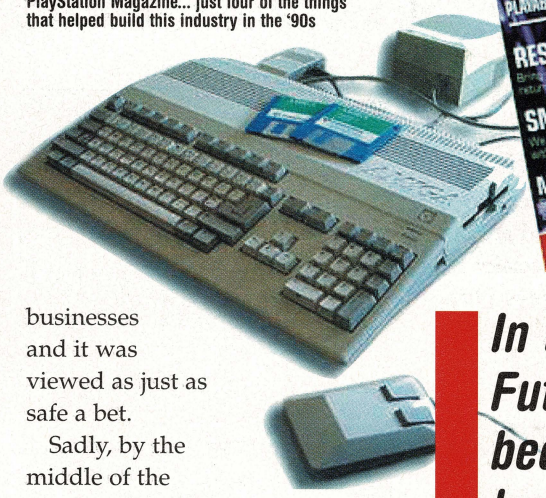
For zeitgeist-reflection rather than pure unit-measured success, it has to be Sega rather than Sony.

It was, after all, Sega that kick-started the '90s with the then unprecedented success of the 16-bit Mega Drive.

In the first few years of the decade the firm did more than

The Best... e Saddest

The Mega Drive, Dixons, the Amiga and Official PlayStation Magazine... just four of the things that helped build this industry in the '90s



In the 1990s, Future really has become nothing less than the Electronic Arts of the magazine world.

any other to drag video gaming out of its self-imposed ghetto and into the pages of the tabloids and style press. And its subsequent decline also typified the industry's struggle with over-stocks and technology transitions.

Sega is now leading the way into a post-PlayStation future with Dreamcast giving the worldwide market its first inkling of exactly what the competition has to do to break the Sony stranglehold.

Retailer Of The Decade
Dixons

As a single, branded, entity, the nod goes to Dixons, just ahead of Electronics Boutique.

EB only hit UK shores in 1995, taking over Future Zone, and didn't achieve super-power status until it gobbled up Game.

It has maintained consistently high market share and will shift hundreds of thousands of games and console systems this year, next year and many, many more years after that.

Disappearing Act
Ocean

Oh dear, poor Ocean. As it entered the decade it was the Brit publisher best-equipped to prosper, both in terms of resources and mindset, as games went mainstream.

Ahead of other more parochially-focused competitors, it had embraced the challenge of consoles and the lure of licences. It had the flash and the cash to cope in the big time. Then things went horribly wrong. Internal development projects went over budget and under expectations. By 1996 co-founders Jon Woods and David Ward had been forced to sell out to Infogrames.

Since then the Ocean brand, along with just about all the company's key management, has disappeared.

Cock-up Of The Decade
Commodore

In 1990, in Europe, the Amiga was, relatively speaking, as big as PlayStation.

That is, it was as dominant within the existing parameters of the industry, it was as important to the major software publishers' businesses and it was viewed as just as safe a bet.

Sadly, by the middle of the decade, it had all gone horribly Atari, with disastrous US management dragging the corporation into financial crisis and beyond just as it needed more resources than ever to combat the arrival of 16-bit consoles.

The firm fell into liquidation in 1994. An attempted resuscitation by German firm Escom came to nothing.

Indies still weep openly at the memory of their all time favourite format, the good old Amiga, and are haunted by thoughts of what might have been.

Media Company Of The Decade
Future

In the 1990s, Future has become nothing less than the Electronic Arts of the magazine world. It really is that dominant and it really is that good.

And like EA, its sales figures and its products are the benchmarks by which others have to measure themselves.

In the past 10 years it has been sold to media group Pearson and then bought back by a resourceful management team lead by founder Chris Anderson and driving force Greg Ingham. It has expanded into the US and most Euro territories. It sells well over a million games magazines in the UK every month and has expanded into other sectors.

Official PlayStation Magazine is the most successful games magazine ever seen (current ABC: 385,764) and it could only have come from Future.

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QUIZ of the nineties

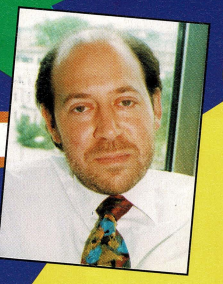
Check out your knowledge of this industry we make a living from with MCV's quiz of the games market over the past decade. There are no prizes, but those of you scoring full marks should probably get youselves a life...

1. What are the names of the brothers that founded and run: a) Rare? b) Codemasters?

2. Which rap star featured in Acclaim's original Mortal Kombat poster ads?

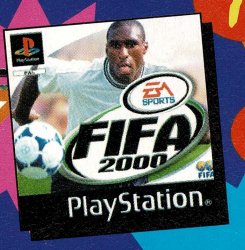
3. Who launched a console called the GX4000?

4. When, exactly, was Sonic2sday?



5. Which retail chain did US chain Electronics Boutique acquire in 1995 to gain its first foothold in the UK?

6. On which console did the Tomb Raider franchise first appear?



7. Apart from enormous wealth, what links Mick Jagger and Bill Gates?

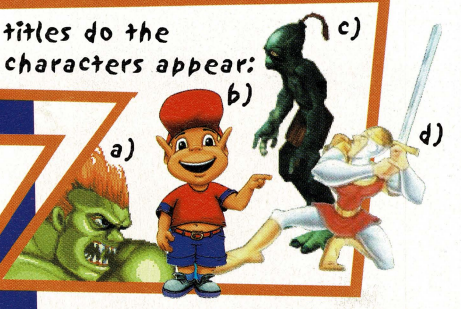
8. Since its launch in '93, EA's FIFA series has been the All Formats Christmas No. 1 every year except one. Which year did it miss out - and which title stole its crown?

9. Who had to be hastily covered up in Virgin's infamous Previous High Scores poster ad for Command & Conquer?

10. Who presented Gamesmaster in between Dominik Diamond's two stints at the helm?

11. Which UK games publisher was the first to float on the London Stock Exchange?

12. In which titles do the following characters appear:



13. How does the games industry link Bob Hoskins with Kylie Minogue?

14. Name the weekly Maxwell-owned mag that closed at the very start of the decade and Future's rival weekly that struggled on for a few more years.

15. Which company did Malcom Miller work for prior to taking over at Sega Europe in 1994?

16. Which resurgent football team does Eidos sponsor?

17. What was Paul Gascoigne pictured playing with on the front page of The Sun, whilst lying in his hospitable bed after injuring his knee in the 1991 FA Cup Final?

18. Before its move to Olympia, where did ECTS originally take place?

19. What did the intitals SAPS stand for in 1995?

20. Which hip American author was so taken with Lara Croft that he wrote a book about her called, imaginatively enough, Lara's Book?

The Answers 1. a) Chris and Tim Stamper; b) David and Richard Darling **2.** Ice T **3.** Amstrad. The real question is, why? **4.** November 24th 1992 **5.** Future Zone **6.** The Saturn **7.** The Rolling Stones' Start Me Up was the theme tune for the marketing campaign accompanying the launch of Windows 95 **8.** Legend of Zelda in 1998 **9.** French President Jacques Chirac **10.** Dexter Fletcher **11.** US Gold **12.** a. Blanka, Street Fighter; b. Addoo, I Can Read I Can Write; c. Munch, Abe's Oddysee; 2; d. Dirk Daring, Dragon's Lair **13.** They both appeared in truly awful films-of-games: Hoskins in Super Mario Brothers and Minogue in Streetfighter **14.** Popular Computing Weekly and New Computer Express **15.** Amstrad **16.** Manchester City **17.** A Lynx, Atari's handheld games machine **18.** The Business Design Centre, Islington **19.** Society Against PlayStation, the spoof protest organisation at the centre of Sony's first ever games hardware marketing campaign **20.** Douglas Coupland

Chart Kings '99

It sounds like a particularly tacky Christmas compilation CD, but it's not. It's a cunningly calculated exclusive **MCV** rundown of how software publishers have fared in ChartTrack/ELSPA's All Formats Top 10 over the last 12 months...

1. Sony

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Gran Turismo	17
Crash Bandicoot 2	12
Syphon Filter	7
Crash Bandicoot 3	6
Ridge Racer Type 4	6
Final Fantasy VII	6
Final Fantasy VIII	6
Tekken 3	6
Spyro 2	5
Wipeout 3	2
Formula 1 '99	2
Crash Team Racing	2
Crash Bandicoot	2
Total Top 10 Score:	**79**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**13**

2. Electronic Arts

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
FIFA '99	25
C&C: Tiberian Sun	7
FA Premier League Stars	7
FIFA 2000	6
Sim City 3000	5
Alpha Centauri	3
Alien Vs Predator	3
Tomorrow Never Dies	3
Dungeon Keeper 2	1
Croc 2	1
Superbike World Championship	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**62**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**11**

3. Eidos

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Tomb Raider 2	21
Championship Manager 3	10
Tomb Raider 3	8
Tomb Raider	7
Soul Reaver	5
FA Manager	2
Tomb Raider 4	2
Championship Manager 99/00	2
UEFA Champions League	1
Powerstone	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**59**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**10**

4. Codemasters

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Colin McRrae Rally	16
Brian Lara Cricket	7
TOCA Touring Car	6
TOCA 2	5
LMA Manager	4
Total Top 10 Score:	**38**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**5**

5. Take 2

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Grand Theft Auto	25
GTA London 1969	7
Grand Theft Auto 2	3
Hidden & Dangerous	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**36**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**4**

6. LucasArts

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Star Wars: Racer	12
The Phantom Menace	10
Star Wars: Rogue Squadron	7
X-Wing Alliance	3
Total Top 10 Score:	**32**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**4**

7= GT Interactive

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Driver	18
Abe's Exodus	8
TA Kingdoms	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**28**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**3**

7= Nintendo

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Pokemon Red	10
Pokemon Blue	10
Zelda	8
Total Top 10 Score:	**28**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**3**

9. Konami

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Metal Gear Solid	15
Silent Hill	6
Castlevania	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**22**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**3**

10= Infogrames

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
V-Rally 2	7
V Rally	6
Bugs Bunny Lost in Time	2
Worms	1
Mission Impossible	1
Premier Manager 99	1
UEFA Striker	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**19**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**7**

10= Acclaim

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
WWF Attitude	7
South Park	6
Turok 2	3
Shadowman	2
WWF Warzone	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**19**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**5**

12. Disney

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
A Bug's Life	10
Tarzan Action Game	6
Total Top 10 Score:	**16**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**2**

13. THQ

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Rugrats: Search for Reptar	10
WWF Wrestlemania 2000	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**11**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**2**

14. Activision

Title	Weeks In All Formats Top 10
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	3
Civilization 2	2
Quake 2	2
Civilization: Call to Power	1
Total Top 10 Score:	**8**
Total Top 10 Titles:	**4**

The TimeFrame: Our Chart Kings '99 survey covers ChartTrack/ELSPA charts from the week ending Saturday January 2nd to Saturday December 11th. This spans 49 weeks in total.

The Calculation: It's simple, honestly. Every game scores one point for every week it's in the All Formats Top 10. So, if Company X has three titles in the Top 10 one week, it scores three points that week. If Game Z was in the Top 10 for eight weeks in '99, it will have racked up a total of eight points for its publisher. Put another way, we have monitored 49 weekly charts in the year so far, meaning there have been 490 Top 10 spaces up for grabs, and each company's score is the number of those spaces they have filled....

Most Weeks In Top 10 By Title

Position	Title	Publisher	Total
1=	Grand Theft Auto	Take 2	25
1=	FIFA '99	EA	25
3.	Tomb Raider 2	Eidos	21
4.	Driver	GT Interactive	18
5.	Gran Turismo	Sony	17
6.	Colin McRae Rally	Codemasters	16
7.	Metal Gear Solid	Konami	15
8=	Star Wars Racer	LucasArts	12
8=	Crash Bandicoot	Sony 2	12
10=	Rugrats: Search For Reptar	THQ	10
10=	A Bug's Life	Disney/Activision/Sony	10
10=	Pokemon Red	Nintendo	10
10=	Pokemon Blue	Nintendo	10
10=	Star Wars: Phantom Menace	LucasArts	10
10=	Championship Manager 3	Eidos	10

Source: MCV/ChartTrack/ELSPA. Calculation is for weeks ending January 2nd to December 11th

By Publisher

	Weeks In Top 10
1. Sony	79
2. Electronic Arts	61
3. Eidos	59
4. Codemasters	38
5. Take 2	36
6. LucasArts	32
7= GT Interactive	28
7= Nintendo	28
9. Konami	22
10= Infogrames	19
10= Acclaim	19
12.Disney	16
13. THQ	11
14.Gremlin	9
15. Activision	8

Source: MCV/ChartTrack/ELSPA. Calculation is for weeks ending January 2nd to December 11th

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UK's No.1

MCV Retail Survey

Which accessories/peripherals manufacturer has your store done the most business with this year?

Manufacturer	%
1. Fire/Blaze	28
2. Sony	12
3. Joytech	11
4. Logic 3/Spectravideo	9
5. Madcatz	5
6. Guillemot	4
Creative Labs	4
7. Skream/ED Games	3

"Fire/Blaze has gunned down its rivals in the hardware section of MCV's 1999 retail survey thanks to strong products and a highly impressive commitment to indies" ***- MCV*** *10/12/99*

Over the last twelve months, the BLAZE™ range has grown from strength to strength, with the regular release of unique, best selling products.
Fire would like to thank all Retailers and Distributers for their support in making the range such a phenomenal success throughout 1999.

Best wishes for the festive season from all at Fire.

*UK's No.1 based on selected month chart position from official charttrack figures.

Fire International Ltd
Unit 15, Shaw Wood Business Park, Shaw Wood Way, Doncaster, DN2 5TB
Telephone: 01302 325225 Fax: 01302 322061 Email: sales@fire-international.ltd.uk

BLAZE™

Milleni Wi

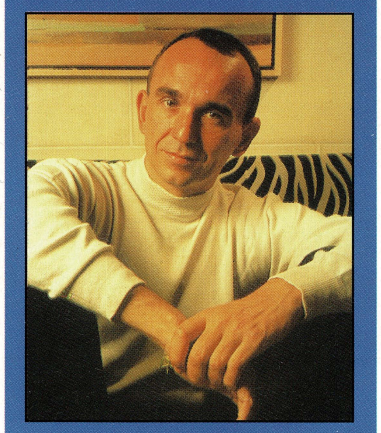
The timely arrival of PlayStation 2, an end to software discounting on the High Street, better quality product, the official announcement of X-Box and a guaranteed hangover cure. **MCV** discovers the hopes and fears of some of the industry's leading figures...

Jeremy Smith, Managing Director, Core Design

Hopes
- That Lara doesn't get affected by the Millennium Bug and dies a nasty death.
- That Manchester City gets promoted. (It might stop Ian Livingstone from continually telling us all what a great deal it was.)
- That Sega can produce enough hardware to satisfy demand.

Fears
- PlayStation 2 ships late.
- PlayStation 2 ships late
- Have I mentioned my fear of PlayStation 2 shipping late?

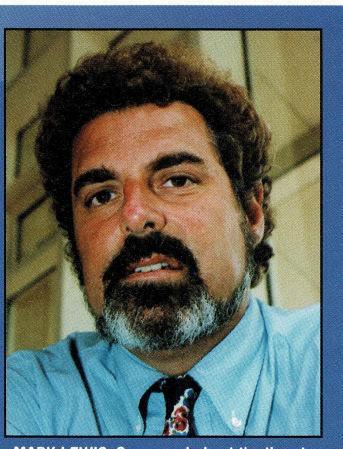
Peter Molyneux, Managing Director, Lionhead Studios



Hopes
- That Black and White achieves its full potential. It should be finished and out in 2000 and has more promise than any title I've worked on before.
- We get Governmental support for the British software industry rather than let our talent be drained from this country.
- The next generation of consoles are the creative and technological playgrounds they promise to be.

Fear
Well I have many fears, but apart from the one that I will lose even more hair than I have already, my main concern is that the software industry will continue its consolidation until all that remains are a couple of huge conglomerates.

Mark Lewis, Vice President Industry Relations, EA

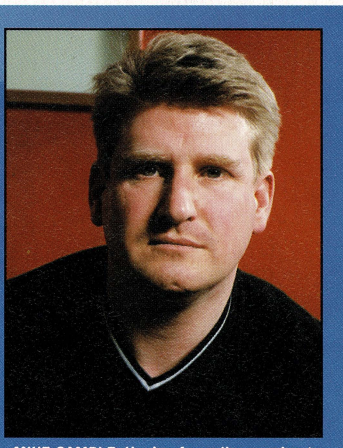


MARK LEWIS: Concerned about the threat of software piracy

Hopes
- Broadband delivery explodes. As old band rates give way to the faster technologies of ADSL, cable modem and satellite connections we will begin to realise the opportunities of online gaming. Multi-player gaming will really begin to take off in the coming year.
- Installed bases grow exponentially. 2000 is going to bring us continued sales of PSX, N64 and Dreamcast. It is more than likely that we will also see the introduction of PS2, Dolphin and perhaps even a new console platform or interactive TV. At the same time, lower cost, faster spec PC based machines will penetrate even more of the consumer base.
- The censorship debate dies down. It is important for our industry to understand the responsibilities that we accept as publishers and work to effective means of self regulation.

Fear
Piracy. The continued theft of intellectual copyrighted material is simply unacceptable.

Mike Gamble, Technical Evangelist, DRG, Microsoft



MIKE GAMBLE: Hoping for online gaming to become established - and a hangover cure

Hopes
- PlayStation 2. Because it might give the market a timely shot in the arm. It will also hopefully increase mainstream exposure and raise the quality bar for products to the point where the sharing of assets between console and PC titles is a viable proposition for developers.
- Online gaming will finally become truly established as a profitable business with playable products. The likes of Everquest and Ultima Online have proven the commercial and gaming validity of massively multi-player, online-only titles and it would be nice to think that this year could see more of the same - not only in the US, but also in Europe.
- A Guaranteed Hangover Cure. Someone will hopefully finally discover it in time for the round of shows, so that by September I'm not feeling like the living dead.

Fear
PlayStation 2. Because it won't help anyone if Sony develops such a stranglehold on the developer community that innovation and competition are stifled by its modus operandi.

Garry Williams, Managing Director, Sold Out

GARRY WILLIAMS: Hopes that retailers will recognise the value of budget software

Hopes
- That retailers focus on value software, realising that it adds significant footfall to stores and complements full price software. An enjoyable gaming experience, even at a budget price, makes the consumer all the more likely to shell out £29.99.
- That the 'big getting bigger' process leaves some room for genuine innovation in the industry. Some companies seem more intent on playing the shares game than publishing titles that actually grow the industry.
- That after 15 years the sheep in the British media start to realise what our industry contributes to this country's balance of payments - and that they move away from their two stock stories of "16 year old programmer makes millions" and "This game is evil."

Fear
That some of the people driving this industry will be too busy counting their share options to remember the spark and drive that actually placed them in this valued position.

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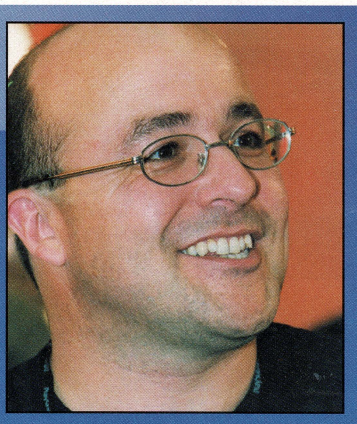
Kelly Sumner, European President, Take 2



KELLY SUMNER: Worried that the market may not have learnt its lessons in the past

Hopes

- That we all remain positive and realistic about the year ahead.
- That Sony hits its target dates with PlayStation 2 and continues to support PlayStation 1; that Sega maintains some competition to Sony; that Nintendo re-thinks its lack of commitment to Europe.
- Less product, but better quality from all the publishers. We always talk about it, but do we really mean it?

Fear

That the industry may not have learnt its lesson from the previous transition years in the market.

Giles Thomas, European Marketing Director, Sega

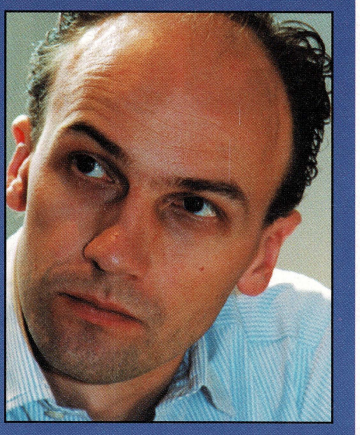
Hopes

- Just some of the excitement, energy, creativity and achievement of this year.
- A holiday.
- A new Steps album (because Steps alone can keep my daughter off the Dreamcast).

Fear

Manchester United winning the Premiership again.

Christian Gloe, European Managing Director, Crave



Hopes

- Our Japanese office discovers the new Pokemon.
- Nintendo sells another 10 million Game Boys (see above).
- Crave becomes a top 5 publisher.

Fear

We fail to retain the German Software cup.

Tim Chaney, Co-President, Virgin

Hopes

- Sony releases PS2 on schedule.
- Our 10 current prototypes are ready for it (or thereabouts).
- Microsoft green lights X-Box, whatever that is, for release at £199.

Fear

Sony fails to react (i.e. licence fee reductions) to downward retail pricing of software.

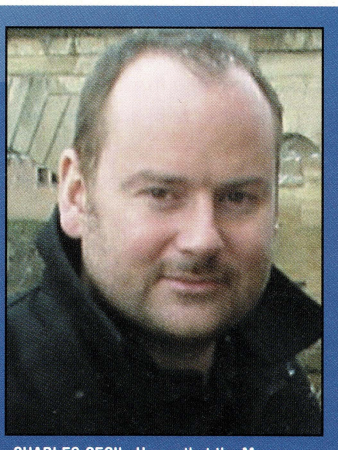
Charles Cecil, Managing Director, Revolution Software

Hopes

- That the year 2000 continues the acceleration of innovation we've witnessed during the last couple of years. Games are better than ever before, and that's not just because of the leap in technology but because we have a better understanding of what people want to play.
- That PlayStation 2 turns out to be as incredible as it appears, but that it doesn't totally blow away Dreamcast. Even Sony admits it would be worrying if there was no serious competition.
- That the Mayans were not as bright as we believe. We did a lot of research into the prophecies of the Aztecs for Broken Sword 2, and they came up with a date for the end of the world. Everything else they predicted has come true. If they're right, we'll only have 12 years to go.

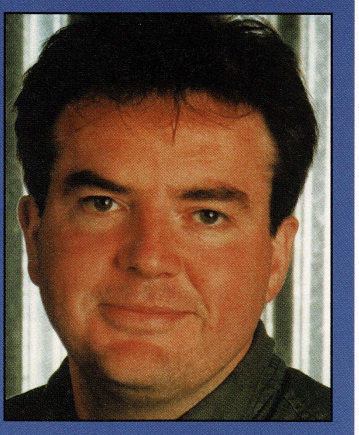
Fear

That the next generation of consoles succeeds commercially to the extent that we find ourselves developing for all of them. It would be a nightmare to have to code versions of a game for them all.



CHARLES CECIL: Hopes that the Mayans weren't correct about the end of the world

Greg Ingham, Chief Executive, Future Publishing



Hopes

- The City continues to wise up about the value of games companies.
- PlayStation 2 ushers in a new era of creativity, sales, price stability, great opportunities and general bonhomie.
- The industry doesn't get diggedy-doggedy bland. We don't all have to grow up and do the 'We're a Very Serious Company' routine. We should be more proud to achieve success - and have a ball in the process...

Fears

None. None at all.

Bob Dewar, Executive Vice President - Int. Publishing, Activision

Hopes

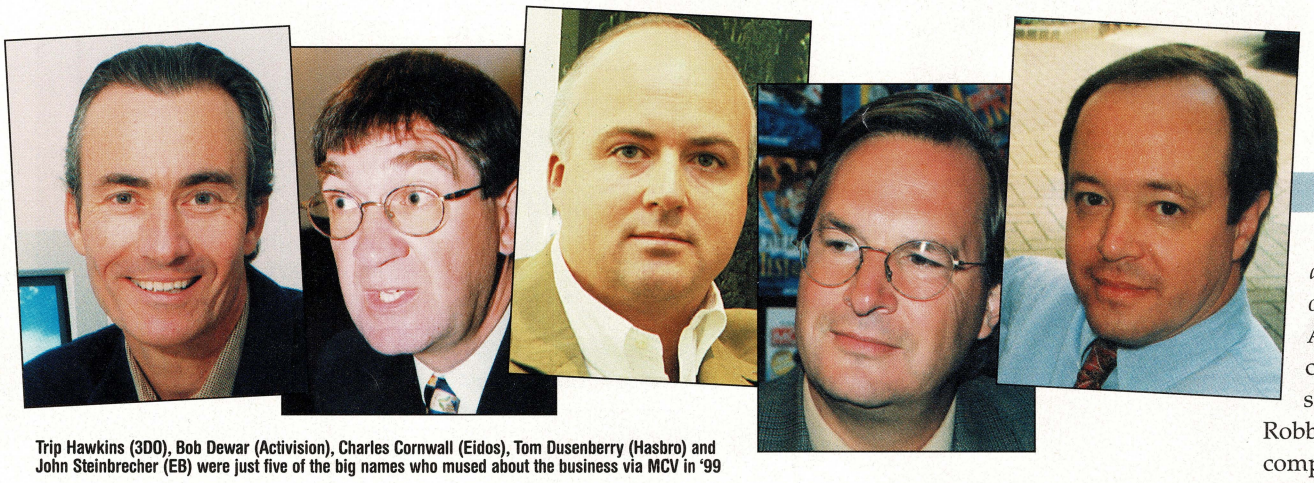
- Hardware companies work more closely with publishers regarding manufacturing and royalty rates.
- Retail chains stop trying to convince the industry that it's the consumers who want lower pricing.
- That every part of the industry would stop thinking all publishers are making huge profits.

Fear

That this industry refuses to understand we all need to work together. Whether it be the developer, the retailer, the hardware giant or the publisher. This industry will live or die on the way we treat and nurture two things in all our businesses: people and product.

It's that time of year again, when we trawl through our back issues to look for the most profound statements of the year. Big statements, bold statements, beautiful statements. They're all here in black and white…

They Said It In '99...



Trip Hawkins (3DO), Bob Dewar (Activision), Charles Cornwall (Eidos), Tom Dusenberry (Hasbro) and John Steinbrecher (EB) were just five of the big names who mused about the business via MCV in '99

January

"I'm the industry cockroach. No matter what happens, I'll be the last one standing."
Trip Hawkins, 3DO. But then he started drinking with the former Infogrames boys…

February

"Price is the knee-jerk way of saying, 'We got it wrong, we're not confident of achieving budget, we bought too much stock and now we're going to slash prices to get ourselves out of this mess'."
Virgin Megastores' senior product manager for games **Bart Saunt**, a few months before he kick-started the biggest price war of the year on PlayStation software.

"If it means that some senior people are going to have to really roll their sleeves up and do more of a junior role, then that's what they're going to have to do."
Peter 'as long as it's not me' Bilotta, following the merger of Virgin Interactive and Interplay's European offices.

March

"Sony bought my soul today."
Dave Perry, Shiny Entertainment, at the initial unveiling of PlayStation 2 at the Tokyo International Forum.

April

"I believe they have to seriously bulk up if they're to survive."
Hasbro Interactive boss **Tom Dusenberry**. And he's talking about EA… now that's scary.

May

"Heathrow."
EA's jet-setting international boss **David Gardner** reveals where he feels most at home.

June

"It's the reaction of a retailer that's losing market share. It's all about PR and over-stocks."
Electronics Boutique's **John Steinbrecher** offers his own take on Virgin Megastores' PlayStation price-cutting tactics.

July

"It's like being in a duel, but by the time we've taken ten paces they've shot us twice."
Pink Planet's **Brad Burton** gives the indie view of chains breaking release dates.

August

"Sometime next century."
Electronic Arts' Westwood marketing director **Graeme Struthers** opts for caution when asked about a release date for the next C&C game.

September

"There's an awful lot of difference between being tall and strong as opposed to big and fat."
EA's president **John Riccitiello** considers those who try to copy his company.

"They could start by selling 5m units. That would probably work."
Riccitiello again. This time on what Sega has to do to tempt Electronic Arts into developing for Dreamcast.

"Sometimes little boys go into caves looking for cubs and run out when they come face to face with a bear. I don't think we're going to be part of any toy firm."
You got it… **Riccitiello**. On rumours of Hasbro looking to buy Electronic Arts.

"Any digital company that overlooks the web is finished, washed up…and pretty quickly."
Charles Cornwall, Eidos.

October

"It's a spreadsheet business. Establish your distribution and then know your numbers."
Frank Herman, the romantic old fool, on the principles behind the newly launched Crucial Entertainment budget label.

"The only mistake Nintendo ever made was to under-estimate Sony."
A 'source' close to the Kyoto giant comes across like a movie trailer.

"You don't have to be an inspirational figure every day of the week. In fact, if you are, you can turn into an aggravating bastard that people tell to shut up."
Peter Molyneux, Lionhead.

"Games have always been cool. They've just been misunderstood."
Sam Hauser, RockStar. That's his label, not his profession.

November

"It is not a violent game, although I am sure we will have our critics in the tabloids."
A bemused **Bill Ennis** considers the furore over SCI's signing of The Great Train Robbery… but only after completing a photo-shoot with Ronnie Biggs.

"We're sure he would see the funny side."
Sean Brennan, Virgin, after the ASA banned its Messiah ad featuring the Pope smoking a spliff.

"EA close to AOL mega-deal"
MCV. It was a world exclusive, you know, a *world* exclusive.

"We'll be looking to repair our margins accordingly."
PlayStation discounting hits EB's profits. But CEO **John Steinbrecher** doesn't mean prices are going back up.

December

"We're being squeezed at either end."
Activision's **Bob Dewar** knows that Steinbrecher doesn't mean prices are going back up. And Sony isn't lowering its royalty fee either. Ouch.

"I read MCV. Everything else goes in the bin."
One of the 75 per cent of **Indie Retailers** who prefer the industry's largest circulation trade weekly.

"EB, Dixons and the others must kill their businesses in order to fully participate online."
Gameplay's **Mark Strachan** kindly maps out the future for his bricks and mortar rivals.

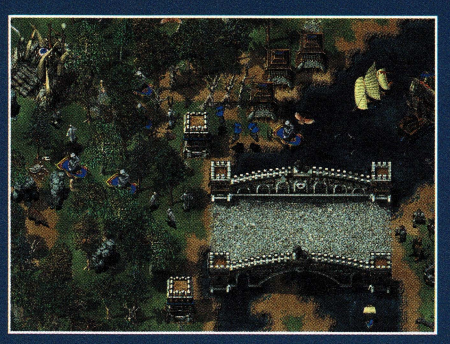
RETURN TO THE FIRST MILLENNIUM

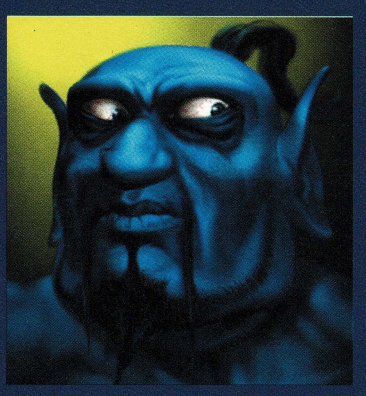
TZAR

THE BURDEN OF THE CROWN

Build an empire and unite a warring world in this absorbing game of magic, management and military strategy.

- 3 Civilisations
- 4 Strategies
- Over 20 missions in single player mode
- Multiplayer option via LAN or Internet





TZAR The Burden of the Crown™
available for PC CD ROM - January 2000

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Next February, more than 7000 delegates involved in every aspect of content development and delivery will join forces with the games industry at Milia 2000. Together, they will shape the future of Interactive Entertainment.

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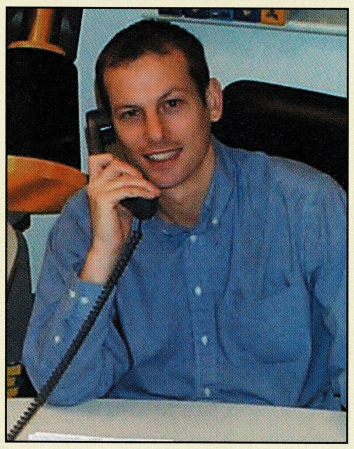
Milia 2000

THINK.TANK SUMMIT: 14-15 FEBRUARY 2000
EXHIBITION: 15-18 FEBRUARY 2000
PALAIS DES FESTIVALS, CANNES, FRANCE.

TED BARACOS, TEL: 44 (0)20 7528 0086, FAX: 44 (0)20 7895 0949.

McIntosh promoted, Sloan quits Ubi Soft

New role for Lego sales manager, Sloan switches to agency, Iremonger joins Activision, Cherry picked for Smith's games division...



PAUL MCINTOSH has been promoted to European OEM and new business development manager at Lego Media International. He was previously Northern European sales manager, having joined Lego following senior sales stints at Sierra/Havas and Vtech Electronics. McIntosh's new position will see him driving Lego Media products into new markets through third party agreements.

With **MARTYN GIBBS** off to head up the HMV games department in the New Year, WH Smith has appointed **MATTHEW CHERRY** as manager of music and multimedia.

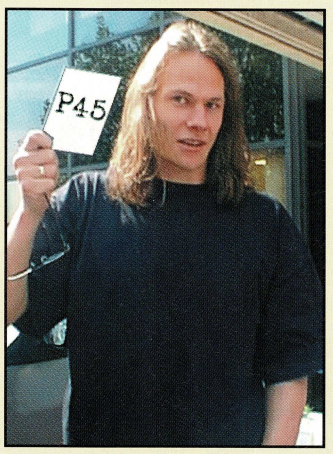
Games and multimedia outfit Graphic State has hired **CLAIRE HILL** as commercial manager. Hill will promote the company's expanded portfolio of services.

TIM TUCKER has been promoted to the position of publisher on Future Publishing's PlayStation Max and Official UK PlayStation Tips magazines. Tucker was previously assistant pubisher and has worked at Future for eight years, editing GamesMaster magazine along the way.

Activision has hired **MARCUS IREMONGER** as senior producer for European Studios.

Iremonger has previously held senior production posts at both Electronic Arts and Virgin Interactive, working on titles such as Screamer Rally and Superbikes World Championship.

Fox Interactive has announced the appointment of **KARLY YOUNG** as director of brand marketing in the US. Young joins the company from NovaLogic and will be responsible for the product marketing of Fox's PC line-up, as well as promoting the generic Fox Interactive brand.



Popular PR man at Ubi Soft **KEITH SLOAN** has left the firm to join London agency Foresight. He has been recruited within the company's new media division and is taking up the role of online marketing account manager.

If you would like your company's appointments featured within our Industry Appointments page, simply email your details to **Lisa.Foster@mcvuk.com**. Alternatively, fax us on **01992 535648** or telephone the MCV Newsdesk directly with your information on **01992 535646**. Photos are particularly welcome.

Newswire

Ad network launched

A new take on Internet advertising has been launched. www.advertwizard.com has been created by On-line PLC and claims to be a radical departure from conventional banner ad services. Customers register free for web promotion, with adverts placed to target each product's exact target audience. Slots can be ordered online, with the creators promising a 'fuss-free' system.

Cruise Controls the Net

PR firm Cruise Control's online PR department offers a total Internet service with a dedicated media team targeting global websites in order to promote games or peripherals across the web. Cruise Control claims it is the first step in proving the importance of the many gaming domains.

Explorer arrives

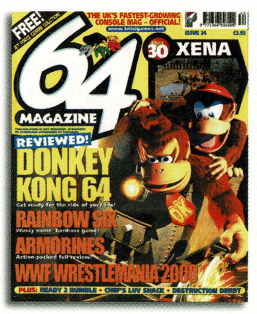
PC Explorer, the first title from fledgling magazine publisher Live was launched on December 23rd. Aimed at affluent '40-somethings' and Internet users, the magazine has been put together by a host of ex-IDG staff following Paragon's acquisition of the IDG stable of titles.

Rage wins league

Rage Software's Liverpool division emerged victorious during its Five-A-Side tournament against fifteen industry teams. The Liverpudlian team pipped its Birmingham studio in a hotly-contested final, with Sony QA in third place.

Media Choice: 64 Magazine

Publisher: Paragon
Tel: 01202 299900
Price: £3.95
Pages: 100
Advertising: 18%



Give-aways: 212-page tips book for Jet Force Gemini

Content: News, reviews, previews and tips for all the latest N64 releases.
Impressive round-up of every UK and import N64 title to date

Previews: Harrier 2001, Army Men: Sarge's Heroes, Hot Wheels Turbo Racing, Supercross 2000

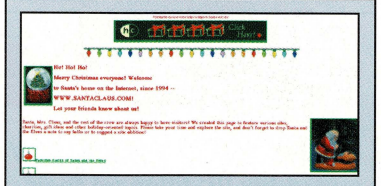
Reviews (out of 100): Donkey Kong 64 (93), Rainbow Six (92), Xena (85), Destruction Derby (74), WWF Wrestlemania (93), Ready 2 Rumble (75), WCW Mayhem (64), Paperboy (41), Road Rash (79), Rocket: Robot on Wheels (91), Chef's Luv Shack (69)

Average Score: 79

Rate Card: Full Page: £1,800 DPS £3,200

Editor: Andy McDermott
Ad Manager: Felicity Mead

Sitewatch



Santa Claus

www.santaclaus.com

We realise that Father Christmas is pretty busy at this time of year, but his site lacks a bit of sparkle. While it contains loads of recipes, jokes, virtual Christmas cards and the chance to email the man himself, it's a strangely spartan site. Would it have hurt to have added a bit of tinsel or holly? You can do better, Santa. Bah humbug...

Rating 3/5

Up Close & Personal: Simon Harvey, Director, Barrington Harvey PR

What was your first job in the industry?
Trainee reporter. Greg Ingham, was my first boss and it involved getting the tea, meeting my first proper alcoholic (no names), an earful of a colleague's marital grief - and all for £70 a week...

Most important lesson learned?
Don't believe everything people tell you.

Barrington Harvey has been around since 1988. How has the industry changed in that time?
When I started nobody else was doing anything in games PR. Now it's more to do with spending and creating ideas and

interest in products, rather than convincing people that software (or whatever) is interesting or relevant to the customer.

What's the secret of BH's longevity?
It's partly something that Greg Ingham told me: work hard and never settle for second best. It's all about thinking ahead and seeing changes before they come.

Funniest memories?
Stephen Hall's underpants, anything regarding Declan Brennan, the Kevin Toms 'Readers' Husbands' incident. Mind you, dismantling a car at the first Computer Arena in Jersey was surreal...

What's the strangest thing a client has asked you to do?
'Could you go and meet my wife for me, I'm busy at the bar?'

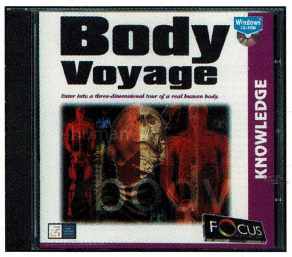
Plans for New Year's Eve?
Either the Thames fireworks or I'm off to Vegas for some indulgence. You certainly won't see me at the Dome...

HOME

This week Matt Camp learns about the past 100 years and brushes up on his French, thanks to Dorling Kindersley. Meanwhile, Focus Multimedia supplies a Body Voyage and MegaSystems offers a 3D exploration into the amazing world of dinosaurs...

Body Voyage

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **Focus Multimedia**
Tel: **01889 570156**
Price: **£9.99**



FOCUS CONTINUES its range of high-quality yet affordable software titles with Body Voyage.

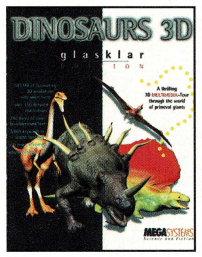
The disc explores the human body using photography, video clips and 3D reconstructions of internal organs. These images can be rotated at any angle for closer examination.

Also included is the now infamous American convict who was cut up into some 18,000 thin slices. These cross-sections can be viewed in sequence to literally journey through the body.

There is a huge amount of information at the user's disposal and it should appeal to those studying human biology or with a morbid facination for body parts.

Dinosaurs 3D

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **MegaSystems**
Tel: **0121 236 1990**
Price: **£19.99**



WITH THE BBC'S Walking With Dinosaurs series re-awakening an interest in the extinct creatures, MegaSystems releases Dinosaurs 3D with impeccable timing.

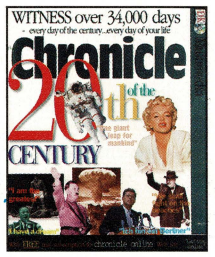
There are a huge number of 3D animation sequences that offer glimpses into how the dinosaurs may have lived. There are also over 240 pages of text explaining the numerous scientific facts and theories about these beasts.

A comprehensive search-engine is included, enabling quick and easy access to any part of the software.

A slick and detailed CD-ROM that could prove irresistable to a young PC user with a pocket full of Christmas present money.

Chronicle of the 20th Century

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **Dorling Kindersley**
Tel: **0171 969 8488**
Price: **£19.99**



WITH JUST A little over a week before the historic step into the year 2000, Dorling Kindersley offers Chronicle of the 20th Century as a permanent record of the last 100 years of our history.

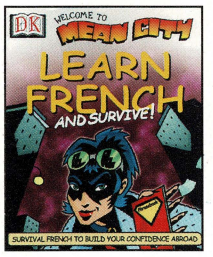
There are countless video and sound clips, news stories, biographies and essays detailing the famous and infamous occurences of this century.

Thankfully, DK has supplied an easy-to-use interface to navigate and explore the huge archive of information, while a hotlink to the Chronicle Online website is included for additional information and support.

Another excellent title from the Dorling Kindersley stable.

Learn French and Survive

Available: **Out Now**
Supplier: **Dorling Kindersley**
Tel: **0171 969 8488**
Price: **£19.99**



LEARN FRENCH and Survive aims to add fun to language learning with a comic-book style and an emphasis on gameplay and exploration.

The young French student has ten hours to discover the whereabouts of a missing reporter by venturing into a fictional French city and interacting with numerous characters.

The only items available to the user is a map of the city and a phrase book. The package doesn't promise fluency in the language but simply teaches the basic skills of communication.

Funny and addictive gameplay offers a refreshing change to the usual language packages.

Release planner

An at-a-glance guide to new education, reference, lifestyle and utility PC titles on their way to retail...

BBC Multimedia
☎ 0181 222 1571

Teletubbies (PlayStation)	February 3rd
Noddy (GBC)	February 17th

BTL Publishing
☎ 01274 841373

AA A to B 2000 Journey Planner	January
Easy Tutor Learn Internet Now	January
Easy Tutor Learn Lotus Smartsuite	January

Computer Bookshops
☎ 0121 778 3333

Encyclopedia for Smart Kids 1	February
Encyclopedia for Smart Kids 2	February
Rome: Crime, Passion and Power	March

Data Becker
☎01420 22707

Copy Station	January
3D Shop Designer	January
Invitation Maker	January

Dorling Kindersley
☎ 0171 836 5411

The Wiggles	February
Test for Success Age 11	March
Three Little Pigs	March

Europress
☎ 01625 855000

Number Crew 1	January 28th
Number Crew 2	January 28th
Maths Key Stage 2	February 4th
A-Level Revision Maths	February 4th

EuroTalk
☎ 0171 371 7711

Talk Now: Gujurati	January
Talk Now: Hindi	January
Talk Now: Kannada	January
Talk Now: Malayam	January

Focus Multimedia
☎01889 570156

Kids Mensa	January
Fuzzy and Floppy	January
V-Mail	January
Route Finder France	January
Astrology for Lovers	February

Sherston Software
☎ 01666 843200

Number Train	January 4th
Science Keywords Material World	January 4th
Oxford Literacy Web - Sound Activities	February 1st
Oxford Literacy Web - The Big ABC	February 1st
Oxford Reading Tree Stage 5	February 20th

The Learning Company
☎ 01293 651300

Nick-o-Matic Brain Bender	January
PrintShop 10	January
Once Upon A Time - Life	January
ClueFinders 5 & 6	February
ClueFinders 6 & 7	February
Orly's Draw A Story	February
Oxford University GCSE Guide	February
Elmo's Number Journey	March
Elmo's Letter Adventure	March
Image Factory 200k & 500k	March
ClickArt 40k & 65k	March
Real Homes 3D Designer	March
3D Home Design Suite	March
3D Home Architect	March
Total 3D Landscape	March

Tivola
☎ 0208 255 2442

Max on the Moon	February
Oscar Drops into the Countryside	February

Ubi Soft
☎0181 944 9000

Playmobil - Hype the Time Quest	November
Playmobil - Alex Builds His Farm	November

To ensure your company's inclusion in this invaluable retail guide to software products arriving outside the mainstream games area, send information and materials directly to **Matt Camp, MCV Media UK, St. Andrew House, 46-48 St. Andrew Street, Hertford, Herts SG14 1JA.** Tel: **01992 535646** Or email details to **Matt.Camp@mcvuk.com.**

REFERENCE TOP 25

1.	Encarta 2000	Microsoft
2.	Geoff Hamilton's 3D Garden	GSP
3.	AutoRoute Express GB 2000	Microsoft
4.	UK-Info 4.0 Standard	CD ROM Dist.
5.	Encarta 2000 Ref. Suite	Microsoft
6.	Driving Test Success	Focus
7.	Journey Planner UK	TLC
8.	Encarta 2000 Deluxe	Microsoft
9.	Family Tree	GSP
10.	Family Tree Maker 6.0	TLC
11.	20th Century Day by Day	D.K.
12.	Star Trek: Starship Creator	Ablac
13.	Family Tree	TLC
14.	Ultimate Family Tree Deluxe	TLC
15.	OS Atlas of Great Britain v2	Focus
16.	Compton's Encyclopedia 98	TLC
17.	Route Planner Pack	GSP
18.	Alan Titchmarsh's Garden	Hasbro
19.	Encarta 2000 World Atlas	Microsoft
20.	BodyWorks 6.0	TLC
21.	Travel Manager	TNT
22.	Interactive 3D World Atlas	TLC
23.	Family Tree Maker 6.0	TLC
24.	Star Trek Encyclopedia	Ablac
25.	BodyWorks 5.0	TLC

Source ELSPA/ChartTrack, November sales

HARDWARE - BEST OF 1999

It's difficult to choose just four 'best' products of '99. MCV picks hardware from Sega, Guillemot, Joytech and Creative Labs...

Dreamcast

Released: **October 14th**
Supplier: **Sega**
Telephone: **0208 498 2100**
Price: **£199.99**

WITH PLAYSTATION 2 lined up for 2000, Sega's off-white hope had to succeed from the off. And sales figures thus far are certainly impressive with 500,000 units sold in Europe to date and one million in the US.

From a standing start, the console has instantly made Sega the number two player in the console wars and is home to some already classic titles. Soul Calibur springs instantly to mind.

Dreamcast was also the first console to offer Internet access. And with patience, it works.

Undoubtedly the hardware success story of the year. It's good to have Sega back.

3D Blaster Annihilator

Available: **November**
Supplier: **Creative Labs**
Telephone: **0118 934 4322**
Price: **£199.99**

WHILE THE REST of the world went mad about the specs for the sequel to the PlayStation, NVIDIA locked itself in a room somewhere and came up with this beast of a PC graphics card to match Sony.

Annihilator is an appropriate name for Creative's latest card being based as it is on NVIDIA's GeForce 256 chipset.

The card uses the world's first 256-bit 3D processor, capable of 15m polygons a second and includes onboard lighting effects and geometry calculations that free up the computer's CPU, allowing it to concentrate instead on other features.

The power of PSX 2 - right now.

Ferrari Racing Wheel

Released: **November**
Supplier: **Guillemot**
Telephone: **0181 686 5600**
Price: **£39.99**

THE FIRST FRUITS of Guillemot's Ferrari licence was this shock racing wheel for PlayStation. It reached No. 5 in the November charts after just a week on sale.

The wheel sports the Ferrari branding of course, and offers a host of other features that belie its attractive price.

A set of pedals is included, for example, offering analogue breaking and acceleration control as well as a set of wheel mounted gear selectors. The unit offers a strong vibration effect too.

Excellent licence, excellent price and an excellent product.

Airpad

Released: **November 10th**
Supplier: **Joytech**
Telephone: **0181 960 8606**
Price: **£24.99**

LIKE ALL GOOD IDEAS, Airpad is a simple one. The pad uses tilt technology that allows users to control games by physically moving the unit through two axes - left and right, as well as forward and back.

The circular design, again simple, makes the pad very comfortable to hold and offers users the chance to remove the front and replace it with other stylish designs.

No setting up is required and the sensitivity of the movement can be adjusted to suit the individual PlayStation user. Nice.

If you would like your hardware products featured on this page, contact **George Kotsiofides** on 01992 535646. Please note that we require a visual and full marketing information.

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300 WATTS
DON'T JUST HEAR THE GAME...
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Great game, fantastic graphics, shame about the sound, but not any more thanks to the ScreenBeat SOUND STATION – get the sound quality of a £500 TV from your portable. The new ScreenBeat SOUND STATION 300 watts of pure sound quality. Blow your mind with the stylish acoustically engineered speaker system. Hear the difference as the sub-woofer thumps out the sound of the engine as you rev the game to the limit. Listen to the world in 'wrap around' sound from the twin satellite speakers. The ScreenBeat SOUND STATION is the must have audio add on for the serious games player, compatible with Sony PlayStation, Sega Dreamcast and multimedia PC's. This top range speaker system can also be used on your personal cassette, portable CD and MP3 player, to give you a true stereo system sound quality anywhere you want.
Logic 3
SpectraVideo plc (UK)
33 Northfield Industrial Estate,
Beresford Avenue, Wembley,
Middlesex, HAO INW, U.K.
TEL: 020 8902 2211 FAX: 020 8903 6625
WEB: www.spectravideo.com
SPECTRA VIDEO
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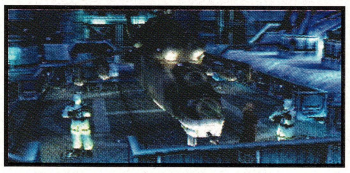
ORDER TIPS - BEST OF 1999

A look at some of the best games of 1999. Titles highlighted include PlayStation blockbusters Driver from GTI, Metal Gear Solid from Konami and Tomb Raider IV from Eidos. Pokemon saved Nintendo's day, while Sega enjoyed Sonic Adventure and Soul Calibur...



Metal Gear Solid

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Action
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Street date: February
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION — 1 player

The game that turned Konami into a true super-publisher and one of the finest titles ever made. The game was a 3D update of titles that appeared on the ancient MSX and NES systems of yore. A classic mix of stealth, action, cool graphics and cinematic gameplay ensured massive sales - and an army of imitators. Memorable set pieces such as the helicopter battle with Liquid Snake and the shooting of Meryl by Sniper Wolf smudged the line between games and cinema. Spawned an add-on disc, action figures and other assorted merchandise.

15 FP

SALES POTENTIAL

With a Game Boy title due next year and a sequel expected for PlayStation 2, expect to see a lot more of Solid Snake in years to come. A bankable franchise.

Driver

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Action
Developer: Reflections
Publisher: GT Interactive
Street date: June 23
Estimated street price: £29.99

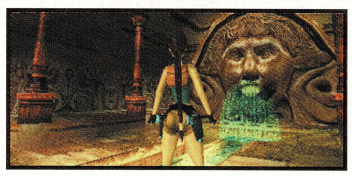
PRODUCT INFORMATION — 1 player

The first blockbuster PlayStation title to feel the pressure of the summer's £29.99 price war at retail. The game has sold three million copies on PC and PlayStation, although how many would have been sold at the standard price is open to speculation. Players took on the role of an undercover cop driving through a series of increasingly hard missions in a variety of US cities. A mish-mash of every film with a car chase in it ensued with a replay recording feature allowing for mini-movies to be created. Great name, great game. Can't wait for the sequel...

15 FP

SALES POTENTIAL

Established a new franchise for GT Interactive but despite fantastic sales, was just a little too late to save the company from acquisition.



Tomb Raider IV: The Last Revelation

GENERAL INFORMATION

PlayStation

Genre: Action
Developer: Core Design
Publisher: Eidos
Street date: December 3
Estimated street price: £29.99

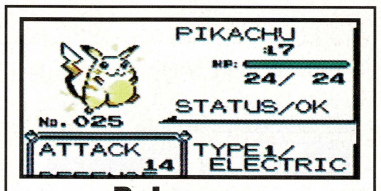
PRODUCT INFORMATION — 1 player

Core Design and Lara Croft deliver the goods for Eidos once again in her fourth installment on Sony's veteran console. It seems however that consumers just can't get enough of the industry's premier figure. After just three weeks on sale, Ms Croft has racked up a total of over 200,000 units in the UK alone. The best looking game of the series with many regarding Last Revelation as the only 'proper' sequel to the original Tomb Raider. Features a 16 year-old Lara Croft discovering her famous backpack as part of the training course, plus better visuals.

11+ FP

SALES POTENTIAL

Can the girl do no wrong? Probably Lara's last game on the original PlayStation. Wherever her next adventure is, expect huge sales. Again.



Pokemon Red/Blue

GENERAL INFORMATION

Game Boy

Genre: Action
Developer: Nintendo
Publisher: Nintendo
Street date: October 1
Estimated street price: £24.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION — 2 players

Hard to believe that Nintendo's ten year-old, 8-bit handheld would pretty much save the company's bacon. And who'd have thought it would have been thanks to a bunch of tamagotchi-like creatures. These Pokemon have to be caught and then trained with the emphasis on collecting an entire set, only possible by trading with friends. The games, produced by Nintendo's resident genius Shigeru Miyamoto, have sold millions worldwide and are repeating their success in Europe with 325,000 units sold through. Could next year's Pokemon Snap save the N64?

3+ FP

SALES POTENTIAL

Huge phenomenon. Huge format. Huge sales for both games. Will sell many, many more units in 2000 and beyond.

Sonic Adventure

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dreamcast

Genre: Action
Developer: Sega
Publisher: Sega
Street date: October 14
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION — 2 players

The biggest selling of Sega's impressive titles at launch. Sonic Adventure is everything a Sonic game should be - mad, loud and very, very fast. All the more impressive because it's carried out effortlessly in 3D, thanks to the power of the Dreamcast. The title is really five games in one, as meeting Sonic's friends opens up the chance to play the game with new characters - and new objectives. Add to that the tamagotchi-like Chao creatures and the variety of sub games and you have a huge title that will appeal to Sonic fans of yesteryear - and a few new ones to boot.

3+ FP

SALES POTENTIAL

The big-hitting spiky blue hero returned to our screens in this flagship title for Sega's new system. Truly shows off what Dreamcast can do.

Soul Calibur

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dreamcast

Genre: Action
Developer: Namco
Publisher: Sega
Street date: November 26
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION — 2 players

Hailed as one of the finest games ever made - and easily the greatest fighting game on any format. Received a perfect score of 40/40 from highly respected Japanese magazine Famitsu - only the second game to achieve such a feat (the first being Zelda: Ocarina of Time). 18 of the most beatifully crafted polygonal pugilists are assembled to battle for the legendary Soul Blade. Graphically, the game is incredible and outdoes anything on any other format. Perfectly balanced to appeal to beginners, while deep enough to keep experts happy for months. Can you tell we like it?

11+ FP

SALES POTENTIAL

It may not have sold as much as some of the games on offer here. But as a feat of programming it really stands unchallenged. Incredible.

MCV Hotlist

Get your pre-orders confirmed for these hot titles...

DREAMCAST					
Sega Bass Fishing	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**January 2000**
Virtua Striker 2	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**January 21st**
Re-Volt	Racing	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	**January 29th**
Resident Evil 2	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**January 28th**
Crazy Taxi	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	**February 18th**
PLAYSTATION					
Ace Combat 3	Action	SCEE	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	**January 2000**
Gran Turismo 2	Racing	SCEE	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	**January 2000**
ISS Evolution	Sports	Konami	01895 470500	Open	**February**
Urban Chaos	Action	Eidos	0181 636 3000	Centresoft	**February 2000**
NINTENDO 64					
Armorines	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	**December 24th**
Castlevania 2	Action	Konami	01895 470500	Open	**February 2000**
Pokemon Stadium	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**March 2000**
Perfect Dark	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**April 2000**
PC					
Daikatana	Action	Eidos	0181 636 3000	Centresoft	**January 2000**
Le Mans 24 Hour	Racing	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	**January 2000**
Messiah	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**January 28th**
Battlezone II	Action	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	**January 21st**
GAME BOY					
Armorines	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	**December 24th**
Wario Land 3	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	**February 2000**
Resident Evil	Action	Virgin	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	**February 2000**

Key to our weekly product guide

- Indicates that MCV considers the product particularly suitable for in-store display.
- 18+ MCV's predicted voluntary or BBFC rating.
- L Indicates that the game has a licence attached to it. The arrow points upwards if the licence adds value at retail, down if not.
- FP indicates a full-price release, BC is a back-catalogue title. ED indicates expansion disc.

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Virgin on a new Century

The new Millennium will see the arrival of the excellent RPG **Planescape Torment** from the makers of Baldur's Gate. Also look out for **Street Fighter Alpha** on the Game Boy Colour...

	TITLE	FORMAT	GENRE	PUBLISHER	TELEPHONE	DISTRIBUTOR	RELEASE DATE	DEVELOPER
FROM 7TH JANUARY	3Sixty	GBC	Racing	Cryo UK	01926 325552	Centresoft	January 7th	Smart Dog
	A Bug's Life	N64	Action	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	January 7th	Disney/Pixar
	Jimmy White's 2	PSX	Sports	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 7th	Awesome Studios
	Planescape Torment	PC	RPG	Interplay	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 7th	Black Isle
	Renegade Racers	PSX/PC	Racing	Interplay	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 7th	Virgin
	Street Fighter Alpha	GBC	Fighting	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 7th	Crawfish
	Total Soccer	GBC	Sports	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 7th	Iridon
	Vigilante 8: 2nd Offence	DC/PSX	Driving	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	January 7th	Activision
	Armada	DC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 14th	Acclaim Studios
FROM 14TH JANUARY	Armorines	GBC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 14th	Acclaim Studios
	Discworld Noir	PSX	Action	GT Interactive	020 8222 9700	Open	January 14th	Perfect
	NBA Jam 2000	N64	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 14th	Acclaim Studios
	Thrasher	PSX	Sports	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 14th	Z-Axis
	Age of Wonder	PC	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 21st	Epic Games
	Airport Inc	PC	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 21st	Krysalis
	Beauty and the Beast	GBC	Action	Nintendo	01703 653377	THE Games	January 21st	Nintendo
	Business Tycoon	PC	Strategy	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 21st	Ubi Soft
	Daffy Duck Fowl Play	GBC	Action	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	January 21st	Infogrames
	Football World Manager 2k	PC	Strategy	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 21st	Ubi Soft
	Marvel Vs. Capcom	PSX	Fighting	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 21st	Capcom
	Revolt	DC	Racing	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 21st	Acclaim Studios
	Shadowman	DC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 21st	Acclaim Studios
	Special Ops	PSX	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 21st	Runecraft
	Street Fighter Alpha 3	DC	Fighting	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 21st	Capcom
	Tom and Jerry	GBC	Action	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 21st	Majesco
	Virtua Striker 2	DC	Sports	Sega	0181 995 3399	Gem	January 21st	Sega
	Wall Street Tycoon	PC	Strategy	Ubi Soft	0181 944 9000	Pinnacle	January 21st	Ubi Soft
	12 'O Clock High	PC	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 28th	Talonsoft
	Alien Nations	PC	Strategy	Infogrames	0161 827 8000	Centresoft	January 28th	Infogrames
	Battlezone 2	PC	Strategy	Activision	01895 456700	Centresoft	January 28th	Pandemic
	Big Bang	PC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	Cricket 2000	PSX	Sports	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	January 28th	EA Sports
	Gran Turismo 2	PSX	Racing	Sony	0171 533 1400	Centresoft	January 28th	Polyphony
	Grudge Warriors	PSX	Action	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 28th	Tempest
	Imperium Gallactica 2	PC	Strategy	GT Interactive	020 8222 9700	Open	January 28th	Digital Reality
	Messiah	PC	Action	Interplay	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 28th	Shiny
	Railroad Tycoon 2	PSX	Strategy	Take 2	01753 854444	Jack of all Games	January 28th	Gearhead&Tremor
	Resident Evil 2	DC/N64	Action	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 28th	Capcom
	Roadsters	DC	Racing	Virgin Interactive	0171 551 0000	Centresoft	January 28th	Titus
	South Park Rally	N64	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	South Park Rally	PC	Racing	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	Team Alligator	PC	Flight Sim	GT Interactive	020 8222 9700	Open	January 28th	Simi/Kuju
	Tee-Off	DC	Action	Acclaim	0171 344 5000	Open	January 28th	Acclaim Studios
	FA-18	PC	Flight Sim	EA	01753 549442	Pinnacle	February 4th	Jane's

Pre-Sell

Battlezone 2

Released: **January 29th**

Format: **PC**

Genre: **Strategy**

Publisher: **Activision**

Tel: **01895 456700**

Virtua Striker 2

Released: **January 21st**

Format: **Dreamcast**

Genre: **Sports**

Publisher: **Sega**

Tel: **0181 995 3399**

PC Gamer
"PC Gamer weeps tears of joy at the birth of a genre."
93%

Edge
"A modern classic."
9/10

PC Format
"An essential purchase for any PC gamer."
91%

Future Gamer
"Virtua looks as beautiful as it ever did. The pea-green pitch is as lush as it was when we were all slotting coins into the game as truant (cough) nippers."
PREVIEW

DC-UK
"Dreamcast will be playing host to the best looking football title ever on a home system."
PREVIEW

Segadojo
"Virtua Soccer is the top coin-op soccer game series. Its graphics shine, its gameplay flows like butter."
PREVIEW

A to Z

12 'O Clock High	January 28th
3Sixty	January 7th
A Bug's Life	January 7th
Age of Wonder	January 21st
Airport Inc	January 21st
Alien Nations	January 28th
Armada	January 14th
Armorines	January 14th
Battlezone 2	January 28th
Beauty and the Beast	January 21st
Big Bang	January 28th
Business Tycoon	January 21st
Cricket 2000	January 28th
Daffy Duck Fowl Play	January 21st
Discworld Noir	January 14th
FA-18	February 4th
Football World Manager 2k	January 21st
Gran Turismo 2	January 28th
Grudge Warriors	January 28th
Imperium Gallactica 2	January 28th
Jimmy White's 2	January 7th
Marvel Vs. Capcom	January 21st
Messiah	January 28th
NBA Jam 2000	January 14th
Planescape Torment	January 7th
Railroad Tycoon 2	January 28th
Renegade Racers	January 7th
Resident Evil 2	January 28th
Revolt	January 21st
Roadsters	January 28th
Shadowman	January 21st
South Park Rally	January 28th
South Park Rally	January 28th
Special Ops	January 21st
Street Fighter Alpha 3	January 21st
Street Fighter Alpha	January 7th
Team Alligator	January 28th
Tee-Off	January 28th
Thrasher	January 14th
Tiger Woods PGA 2000	February 4th
Tom and Jerry	January 21st
Total Soccer	January 7th
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offence	January 7th
Virtua Striker2	January 21st
Wall Street Tycoon	January 21st

Fighting action for GBC, courtesy of Virgin

Sega Release Guide

Title	Format	Date
Virtua Striker 2	DC	January 21st
Sega Bass Fishing	DC	January
NBA 2000	DC	February 18th
Crazy Taxi	DC	February 18th
Red Dog	DC	February 18th
Ecco The Dolphin	DC	April 7th

Activision Release Guide

Title	Format	Date
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offence	DC/PSX	January 7th
A Bug's Life	N64	January 7th
Battlezone II	PC	January 29th
Toy Story 2	PSX/N64	Feb 4th
Soldier of Fortune	PC	Feb 18th
Dark Reign II	PC	TBA
Quake III	Mac	TBA

Toy Story 2 set for arrival in February now

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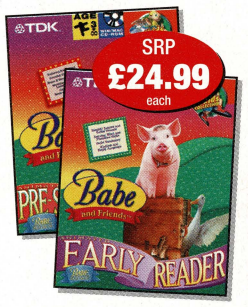

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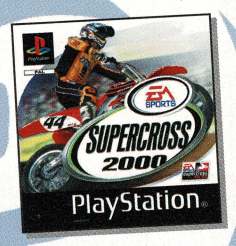

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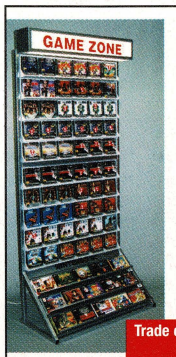

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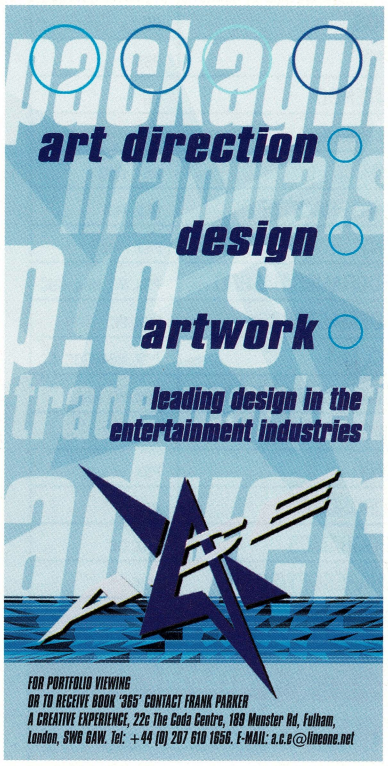

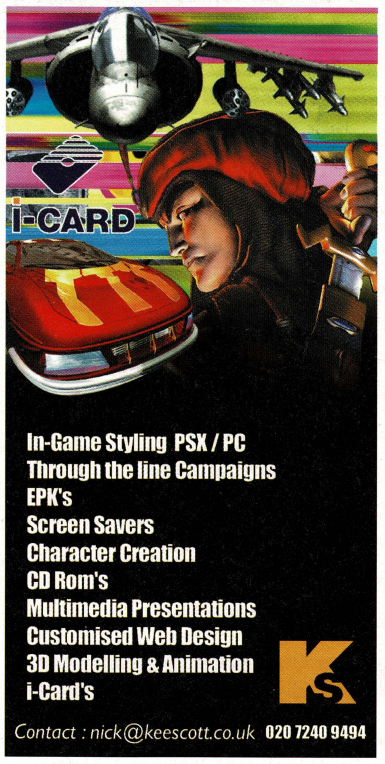

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Due to this issue of MCV being posted early to ensure delivery prior to Christmas, all charts are the same as last week. But a full review of the Christmas charts will feature in our next issue, published on Friday January 14th.

UMER SOFTWARE CHARTS

REAMCAST PSX PC N64 GAME BOY NEO GEO

Every week **MCV** brings you an at-a-glance guide to the UK market's top-selling software titles
All data supplied by ChartTrack and ELSPA

Market Breakdown (Week ending Dec 11th)

MARKET SHARE (UNITS)		% CHANGE
TOTAL MARKET		+18
Full Price Console	46.6%	+21
Full Price Home Computer	23.0%	+11
Budget Console	11.7%	+16
Budget Home Computer	18.7%	+20

MARKET SHARE (VALUE)		% CHANGE
TOTAL MARKET		+18
Full Price Console	55.5%	+21
Full Price Home Computer	26.8%	+11
Budget Console	4.9%	+19
Budget Home Computer	12.8%	+20

SINGLE FORMAT BEST-SELLERS

Format	Title	Label	Publisher
PLAYSTATION	TOMB RAIDER 4: THE LAST REVELATION	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS
NINTENDO 64	WWF WRESTLMANIA 2000	THQ	THQ
PC CD-ROM	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 99/00	EIDOS	EIDOS
GAME BOY	TARZAN ADVENTURE GAME	DISNEY	ACTIVISION
DREAMCAST	SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO	SEGA

ALL FORMATS TOP 40

This Week	Last Week	Title	Label	Format
1	1	TOMB 4: LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	PSX, PC
2	3	FIFA 2000	EA SPORTS	PSX, PC
3	2	TOMORROW NEVER DIES	MGM/EA	PSX
4	4	CHAMP. MANAGER 99/00	EIDOS	PC
5	5	CRASH TEAM RACING	SONY	PSX
6	15	POKEMON RED	NINTENDO	GB
7	20	POKEMON BLUE	NINTENDO	GB
8	NEW	WWF WRESTLEMANIA 2000	THQ	N64, GBC
9	14	DRIVER	GT INTERACTIVE	PSX, PC
10	6	SPYRO THE DRAGON 2	SONY	PSX
11	13	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	INFOGRAMES/HASBRO	PSX, PC, N64, GBC
12	7	COLIN MCRAE RALLY	CODEMASTERS	PSX, PC
13	11	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	PSX, N64, GBC, DC
14	8	TARZAN ACTION GAME	DISNEY/SONY/ACTIVISION	PSX, PC, GBC
15	18	RAYMAN	UBI SOFT	PSX, PC
16	17	GRAN TURISMO	SONY	PSX
19	17	AGE OF EMPIRES II	MICROSOFT	PC
18	9	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	PSX, DC
19	10	FINAL FANTASY VIII	SQUARESOFT/SONY	PSX
20	22	LEGO RACERS	LEGO MEDIA	PC, PSX, N64

This Week	Last Week	Title	Label	FORMAT
21	16	DINO CRISIS	CAPCOM/VIRGIN	PSX
22	28	THE RUGRATS	THQ	PSX, GBC
23	NEW	THIS IS FOOTBALL	SONY	PSX
24	25	TOMB RAIDER 2	EIDOS	PSX, PC
25	NEW	MEDAL OF HONOUR	EA	PSX, PC
26	23	GRAND THEFT AUTO 2	TAKE 2	PSX, PC
27	12	SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO	DC
28	21	THE PHANTOM MENACE	LUCASARTS/ACTIVISION	PSX, PC
29	NEW	MUSIC 2000	CODEMASTERS	PSX
30	31	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	INFOGRAMES	PSX, N64
31	29	THEME PARK WORLD	BULLFROG/EA	PC
32	27	TEKKEN 3	NAMCO/SONY	PSX
33	30	WCW MAYHEM	ELECTRONIC ARTS	PSX
34	24	UNREAL TOURNAMENT	GT INTERACTIVE/EPIC	PC
35	NEW	HALF-LIFE OPPOSING FORCE	HAVAS	PC
36	33	SUPER SMASH BROS.	NINTENDO	N64
37	RE	RAINBOW SIX	RED STORM	PSX, N64, PC
38	RE	V RALLY 2	INFOGRAMES	PC
39	26	CRASH BANDICOOT 2	SONY	PSX
40	32	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	DC

PLAYSTATION: FULL-PRICE

1. Tomb Raider 4	**Eidos**
2. Tomorrow Never Dies	EA
3. FIFA 2000	EA
4. Crash Team Racing	Sony
5. Spyro the Dragon 2	Sony

NINTENDO 64

1. WWF Wrestlemania 2000	**THQ**
2. Super Smash Bros	Nintendo
3. Jet Force Gemini	Nintendo
4. Rainbow Six	Red Storm
5. Rayman 2	Ubi Soft

PC CD-ROM: FULL-PRICE

1. Champ Man. 99/00	**Eidos**
2. Tomb Raider 4	Eidos
3. Age of Empires II	Microsoft
4. Theme Park World	Bullfrog/EA
5. Unreal Tournament	GTI

GAME BOY COLOUR

1. Tarzan	**Disney**
2. Super Mario Bros.	Nintendo
3. WWF Wrestlemania 2000	THQ
4. Zelda DX	Nintendo
5. Warioland 2	Nintendo

PLAYSTATION: BUDGET

1. C. McRae Rally	**Codemasters**
2. Rayman	Ubi Soft
3. Gran Turismo	Sony
4. The Rugrats	THQ
5. Tekken 3	Sony

DREAMCAST

1. Soul Calibur	**Namco**
2. Sonic Adventure	Sega
3. UEFA Striker	Infogrames
4. WWF Attitude	Acclaim
5. Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	Midway

PC CD-ROM: BUDGET

1. Theme Hospital	**EA**
2. Art Attack	Hasbro
3. R. Tycoon Add-On	Hasbro
4. Lego Loco	Lego Media
5. Barbie as Rapunzel	TLC

NEO GEO POCKET COLOUR

1. Metal Slug: First Mission	**SNK**
2. King of Fighters R-2	SNK
3. Pac Man	SNK
4. Puzzle Bobble Mini	SNK
5. Beast Busters	SNK

ChartTrack ELSPA

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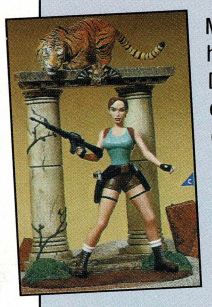

MCV is proud to have hooked up with Planet Distribution to offer our readers the chance to win some game related figures.

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MCV has one Tomb Raider and one Street Fighter figure to give away to five lucky winners. To be in with a chance of winning this prize just answer the following question then email us at mcvproduct@hotmail.com But don't forget to give us your postal address.

What planet are you on?

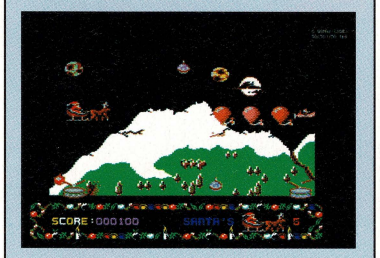
A. Mars
B. Venus
C. Earth

Hidden Camera

Rather than sending out a corporate Christmas card, we thought our dear readers would prefer a more personal message from the MCV trio of Stuart Dinsey, Alex Jarvis (left) and Lisa Foster. He's saying "two weeks off". Honest. Which means we'll be back on Friday January 14th. See you then...

Hall Of Shame

Christmas Games



The Problem: A few years back, the likes of Alternative and Zeppelin would trot out tatty little games starring Santa. This in itself is fine, but the lack of imagination was unbelievable. Alternative's Father Christmas dropped Santa's sleigh into a game of Defender, while Zeppelin's Santa's Christmas Caper was a terrible adventure game. Ho-ho-bloody-ho.

What happened next? Well, it's a big hoorah for the escalating cost of developing games. The monies needed to develop for today's systems means that the likes of Eidos, Codemasters and Infogrames simply wouldn't dream of throwing out such whimsical tosh. If you look hard enough, though, you can still find Xmas screensavers and cheap platform games starring Cliff Richard.

Not fully up to date with current industry lingo and market trends? Worry not, for Bluffer's Guide is here to help you through those long silences in your next big meeting...

Bluffer's Guide

No.67 2000

Not you as well...
Well, we were all set to do Barbie Riding Club, but the end of the Millennium just kept nagging away at the back of our minds.

But what can you say? After the hangovers, won't 2000 be just like any other year?
Au contraire, my party-pooping friend. Not only will it usher in new consoles from Microsoft, Sony and Nintendo, but we'll also be commuting in personal helicopters, wearing see-through lycra and choosing our children's genes from an Argos catalogue.

Will all that really happen in 2000?
Okay, a new console from Nintendo arriving on time is pretty far fetched.

So what dates should I look forward to?
Sony's PlayStation 2 will launch in late March in Japan. Nintendo has suggested a worldwide ship-out for its new machine before Christmas. And X-Box is inching closer, with many expecting a definitive announcement at the very start of the year.

If only the Millennium Dome had playable PlayStation 2 units inside... then people would definitely visit it

And will the new Millennium bring another twelve months of mega-mergers on the software side of the business?
More consolidation seems inevitable, but with the toy giants left catching their breath after the last round of acquisitions, the year 2000 might be a relatively stable one for publishers.

So the games industry is finally settling down as it enters the new Millennium?
Hardly. The anticipated success of the next-gen consoles, particularly PlayStation 2, is likely to bring media companies back into the fray in 2001 and onwards. And then, of course, there's the explosion of digital TV and set-top boxes to contend with, not to mention the on-going promise of the Internet.

What would Buck Rogers think?
Hey, he could still play Pong. Although he might have to do it on his mobile phone.

The future sure ain't what it used to be then...
No, but the graphics are so much better, don't you think? ▮

MCV Newsflash. This online service is available to all 9,000 readers of the printed edition. For free membership send your email address to lisa.foster@mcvuk.com

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THANK YOU AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

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MCV The Market for Home Computing & Video Games

Extended versions of the MCV Online Newsflash will be published on Friday December 31st and January 7th.
To register, email Lisa.Foster@mcvuk.com.

For a copy of MCV's Year 2000 Features List call 01992 535647

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